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The Magazine of Mystery and Horror

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COVER: Gloria Stuart and Boris Karloff in *THE OLD DARK HOUSE* (1932),  
Keye Luke and Warner Oland in *CHARLIE CHAN AT THE RACE TRACK* (1936).



# Scarlet Letters



Rick McKay has done another extraordinary job with his Fay Wray interview in the new *Scarlet Street* (#27), which arrived today. I immediately took off enough time to read it, the letters, and the reviews. McKay has a wonderful knack for capturing a moment, and he must have that special X ingredient in his personality that helps a subject to open up and speak without inhibition. Fay comes across as utterly ageless and charming, and unlike the David Manners interview—which essentially captures the human being in his twilight years—there's a lot of information here about her work in films! Anyway, congratulations once again to *Scarlet Street* on this wonderful coup!

Incidentally, though it was nice to see *Video Watchdog* mentioned in the interview, I should clear something up. We were not the first publication to identify the two cinematographers of DR. X's Technicolor and B&W versions. An article (by Paul Mandell, I think) appeared in *American Cinematographer* about 10 years ago, which I believe was reprinted in *The Cinema of Adventure, Romance and Terror* (1989), edited by George E. Turner. The names of these cameramen also appear in many reference books, and on the respective prints of the two versions. In short, this was not in any way VW's or Richard Harland Smith's discovery or speculation, but an instance of recorded fact. Thanks.

Tim Lucas  
Video Watchdog  
VideoWD@aol.com.

My goodness, how do you boys keep it up? Oops, I'm sorry, I forgot, this is the magazine with the agenda. Let me rephrase that . . . how do you boys turn out one great issue after another? Every time I think, well, they can't top the last issue, you go and confound me and you do top it. And this latest issue is no exception. One great story after another. Even the ads are great. In fact, you have become very tiresome in your greatness, and I feel you need to put out a really bad issue, just to prove that you're human.

I have been purchasing *Scarlet Street* since its inception (well, okay, not Issue #1, and I think it is only fair that you send me a mint original to complete my collection) and I love it, do you hear me? I am an adoring, drooling fan. When people see the drool start coming out of my mouth, they know instantly that I am a *Scarlet Street* addict. There is no cure for this addiction, either. I am having all my copies of *Scarlet Street* professionally bound, but it will look very stu-

pid to have the reprint of Issue #1 in there, so please send me the mint original I asked for several sentences ago.

Anyway, keep up the superior work, and please commend everyone on the staff for their terrific work. Oh, by the way, I don't have a mint original of Issue #1. Can you send it to me? Then I will have a complete collection of original *Scarlet Streets*. Because without a complete collection, my collection can only be thought of as incomplete. If you don't help me in this regard, I'm afraid I will have to tell everyone about your agenda. Love you madly.

Bruce Kimmel  
Varese Sarabande Records  
Studio City CA  
Missing Issue #1

*Under threat of an exposed agenda (punishable by law in 31 states and on the island of Mauritius), we've been scouring the land for a mint copy of Scarlet Street #1. This has resulted in a squeaky clean land, but unfortunately all we've been able to find in lieu of mint is vanilla fudge and rocky road.*

I'm sure I won't be the first, but let me add my voice to the praise that Issue #27

## WANTED: MORE READERS LIKE...



Fay Wray

has certainly garnered! This is a remarkable edition of *Scarlet Street*. There's not a clunker in it. From the centerpiece interview with Fay Wray to the articles, editorials, and letters, it's 100% all the way around.

Where to start? The Fay Wray interview, of course! This so far exceeded any expectations I might have had that it's almost beyond praise. Not only were the questions just the right ones (one might have wished that Rick McKay had been aware that the extreme differences in the color and black-and-white *DOC-TOR X* precluded any chance of side-by-side cameras, but that's nitpicking), but Fay Wray's responses and in fact her whole demeanor made it an interview to be cherished. You read it and you hear her voice—that voice you know from the movies. It is both wonderful and life-affirming in a way that you do not often find in interviews. You come away from it feeling good about things—and with immense respect and love for Fay Wray.

But that slights other fine things in this issue. Frankly, I would have thought Robert Wise rather tapped out as an interview subject, but such is happily not the case here. I certainly read things I wasn't familiar with and Wise comes across as a lovely and generous man. Another fine addition. So too, was the article on *THE MOST DANGEROUS GAME*, the conclusion of *A HUNGER FOR HORROR*, etc.

However, I would single out Lelia Loban's *WISE CHILD: THE CURSE OF THE CAT PEOPLE* for special praise. Not only was this piece meticulously researched and beautifully written, but it is one of the best readings of a film I have come across in a long, long time. I may have had many similar thoughts about the film over the years, but I have certainly never articulated them this well. The insight and perception brought to bear on this odd-film-out in the Lewton classics was on the money and well-deserved. And it had one very notable side-effect on this reader—it made me dig out my laserdisc of this title and watch the film again in the light of what I'd just read. Now this is what good criticism/analysis should do! That it all too rarely does is unfortunate, but when it does—as it did in

Continued on page 8



# THIS MOTHER'S DAY, FLOWERS JUST WON'T CUT IT!!! "Chillingly Good!" LEONARD MALTIN

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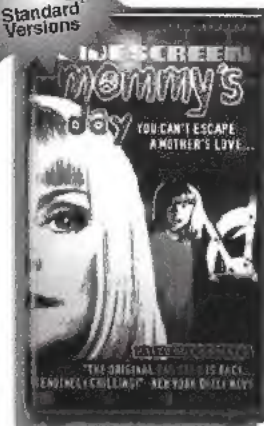
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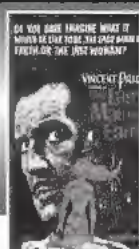
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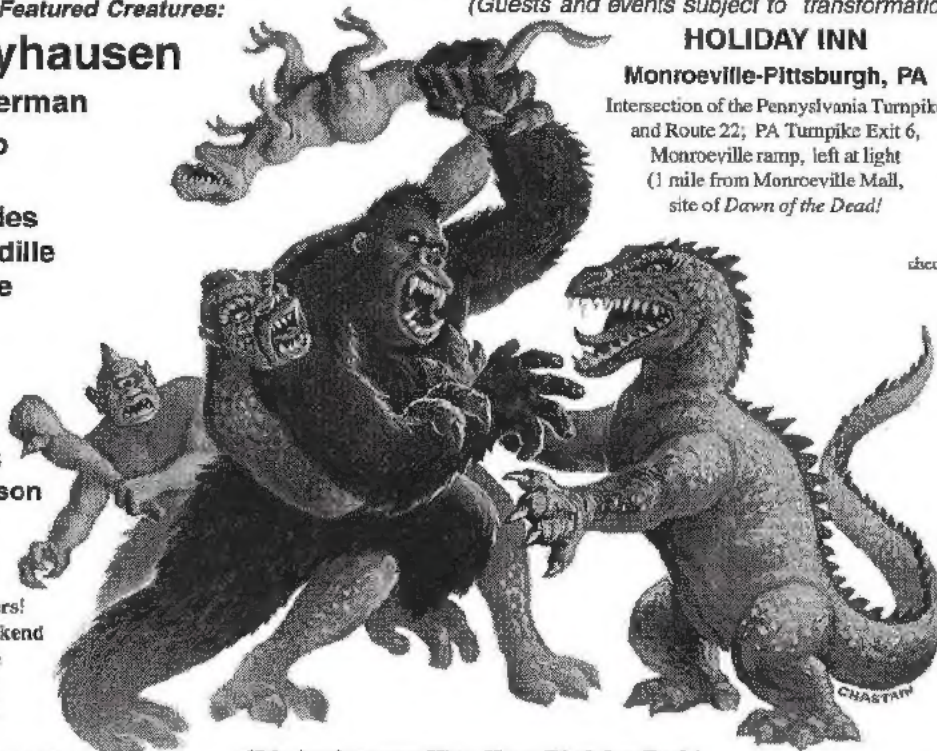
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## SCARLET LETTERS

*Continued from page 4*

this case—it's unreasonable to ask for more—unless it be to ask for more articles just like this!

Ken Hanke

Fort Pierce, FL

When I read David Stuart Davies' lovely and touching tribute to Ronald Howard (SS #25), I couldn't help but think that, sometimes, even though an actor is perceived as having "a fairly undistinguished" career (particularly when he's been inactive for "over 20 years"), he can still, somewhere along the line, have done something that ends up, if not granting him immortality, placing him fondly in our hearts.

For Ronald Howard, this unexpectedly enduring performance is in Hammer Films' *THE CURSE OF THE MUMMY'S TOMB* (1964). It is a wonderfully inventive, wonderfully mesmerizing, wonderfully demented movie—a worthy successor to *THE MUMMY* (1959). In the movie, producer/director Michael Carreras (who also wrote the script under the name Henry Younger) cast two very different actors in the leading roles: Terence Morgan (as a sophisticated, well-traveled, aggressive man of wealth) and Ronald Howard (as a knowledgeable, self-effacing, ingratiating archaeologist). Both actors bring out the best in each other—for Morgan,

it's his glittering urbanity, and for Howard, it's his seductive charm. Indeed, they are so effective that, when Howard's fiancée (Jeanne Roland) begins to transfer her affections to Morgan, you fear for her safety. When it turns out that Morgan is the Mummy's evil brother, who's been roaming the earth for centuries, you're extremely grateful that Howard is there to rescue her from certain death.

In a film that effectively contains all of Michael Carreras' "mummy fingerprints," Ronald Howard shines most brightly and most memorably.

Raymond Banacki

Brooklyn, NY

Hammer Film's *THE CURSE OF THE MUMMY'S TOMB* has long been a favorite here at Scarlet Street. It's waaaay overdue for a video and laser release.

I just finished reading the Fay Wray interview in *Scarlet Street* #27. I enjoyed it a great deal, but there seems to be some confusion over a particular scene in *KING KONG*. In 1938, the Hays Office forced the removal of KONG's more violent scenes, as well as the "strip" scene. As for the latter—I'm not an authority, but I've read *The Making of King Kong*, Cinefax, as well as many magazines devoted in some part to the making of the film. I believe the scene of Kong undressing Ann is as it has always been, since the film's re-

lease. This scene was conceived by Merian C. Cooper and personally animated by Willis O'Brien. Cooper was inspired by the curiosity exhibited by baboons he had observed in the wild. This scene is too complicated to be tampered with; in fact, it could not be shot without the animated Kong in profile, combined with the footage of Fay Wray in the life-sized hand. I have watched *KING KONG* since I was a little girl. Though some stations may have kept the censored print, so far as I know WOR Channel 9 always showed the uncut version, since the censored footage was restored in the late sixties. (I did see a censored version on a Connecticut station years ago, in fact.) But the fault of censorship in this case lies with the Hays Office. The only controversy that I know regarding missing footage in *KING KONG* is the on-going argument over how much of the "sailors in the pit/attacked by creatures" footage was actually seen by the public, if at all. I've seen one photograph of this scene—I think it may be from Porry Ackerman's archives. Different sources say that it was removed from the film because it disrupted the flow of the action (which probably would be true) and was too horrifying (I would agree). Other sources write that it was never shot.

*Continued on page 10*



# Frankly Scarlet

No giant gorilla was seen peeking into the windows of Rainbow & Stars at the top of 30 Rockefeller Plaza the other night—even though Fay Wray was there, listening to the Boswell Revue.

—*The Daily News*, Wednesday, March 18, 1998

It's true; the mighty Eighth Wonder of the World was not in evidence that evening at the top of 30 Rock, but he was much on the mind of his former leading lady, the lovely and effervescent Miss Fay Wray. Although we hadn't joined the beloved thirties star at the Rainbow and Stars show, *Scarlet Street* managing editor Tom Amorosi and I had arranged to meet her and the rest of her party (including her semi-constant companion and interviewer, *Scarlet Street*'s own Rick McKay, and Mark Hampton, creator of the Boswell Sisters Revue) after the show. With that in mind, we'd taken a table for five in the Rainbow Room and deposited ourselves in two comfy chairs that unfortunately faced a wall and not the breathtaking view of the Manhattan skyline. While we nervously awaited our first meeting with Ann Darrow herself, we discussed whether, non-view notwithstanding, Fay might prefer to sit in one of the chairs when she arrived, since they were certainly easier to navigate than having to slide into the tiny booth behind the table. We decided it wouldn't hurt to offer, and Tom did just that when Fay and Friends arrived a few moments later. But the star shook her lovely head. "No, this is fine," she said, and nodding toward a certain 102-story building looming magnificently over the rest of the city, continued with a smile: "Besides, I see an old friend out there."

Well, *Scarlet Streeters*, I'm here to tell you that there's nothing quite so dazzling as sitting next to Fay Wray in full sight of what is still, as far as I'm concerned, the tallest building in the world: the one and only Empire State! If a couple of biplanes, piloted by Merian C. Cooper and Ernest B. Schoedsack, had suddenly flown by, I wouldn't have been at all surprised.

For the next unforgettable two hours, Tom and I fell completely under the spell of the world's first and still foremost Scream Queen. Naturally, the subject of *KING KONG* came up now and then—as did such

other classic genre titles as *THE MOST DANGEROUS GAME* (a particular Fay favorite), *DOCTOR X*, *THE MYSTERY OF THE WAX MUSEUM*, and *VAMPIRE BAT*—but the conversation was wide-ranging and endlessly engrossing. On the subject of travel, Fay reminisced about what it was like to be a movie star in the thirties and to travel from Hollywood to Chicago on the Super Chief, then hop aboard the legendary Twentieth Century Limited for the remainder of the journey to New York. ("It was so exciting! There would be bouquets of flowers at each station stop, and dozens of telegrams!") We discussed Fay's upcoming appearance at a special screening of *KONG* at the Smithsonian Institute, and gladly fell in with her suggestion that it would be wonderful if we could attend. ("Even if you've seen the film—and I know you have—Washington is so beautiful at that time of year, with the cherry blossoms in bloom.") We chatted about my disinclination to set foot in an airplane. ("My last husband was afraid of flying, but he was very brave when it came to real estate.") And to top things off, we had our picture taken!

Hey, listen, you never know when you're going to need photographic evidence for those dull Doubting Thomases out there . . .

\*\*\*

Fay Wray is justly proud to be a part of Hollywood's legend—as is the warm and wonderful *TITANIC* star Gloria Stuart, whose *Scarlet Street* interview you'll find on page 26—and her love of moviemaking was very much on my mind while I watched this year's Academy Awards telecast. Thrilling though it was to watch 70 former Oscar winners seated on stage for a wave or a brief nod as the camera panned past them, I couldn't help but feel that many of the industry people in the audience have no sense of their own history. How else

to explain a montage of Best Pictures that didn't get a single round of applause till we reached some less than immortal movies made in the seventies and eighties? Cheers for 1939's *GONE WITH THE WIND*? Nope. For 1941's *HOW GREEN WAS MY VALLEY*? Not a peep. For *CASABLANCA*? *THE BEST YEARS OF OUR LIVES*? *ALL ABOUT EVE*? *THE APARTMENT*? Nothing. Zilch. Silence—if not of the lambs, then of the sheep who follow today's trends with nary a nod to the past (except when they want to remake it). The crowd came to life for *CHARIOTS OF FIRE* and *THE LAST EMPEROR* and *BRAVEHEART*—but one would have to have a braver heart than mine to prefer these films to those met on Oscar Night with a saddening, disquieting quietude.

There were one or two other signs of the times during the three-hour-plus program. Over the years we've all heard that so-and-so is going to get the "sentimental vote" for such-and-such and waltz home with the little naked gold man. The phrase has always irked me—oh, yes, I've been irked—because it denies the winner the merits of his or her performance. Still, I see nothing terribly wrong that a sense of continuity and tradition should inform some Oscar choices, that showbiz vets should be treated with deference and respect and not as foils for cheap comic chatter, that the show itself be a glamorous night of the stars and not a sorry parade of toilet jokes . . .

The sentimental vote? I wouldn't count on it. It should be clear by now that the sentimental vote is a thing of the past, and, like the rest of Hollywood's past, it's destined to be forgotten by those who should remember it best.

*Richard Valley*

Left to Right: Tom Amorosi, Richard Valley, Fay Wray, Rick McKay, and Mark Hampton gaze out at the Empire State Building.





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## SCARLET LETTERS

Continued from page 8

Well, in any case, it was a pleasure to read this interview with Miss Wray. I look forward to the publication of her newest book. (I already have *On the Other Hand*.) Thank you to interviewer Rick McKay for such a wonderful contribution to *Scarlet Street*.

Jody Marcus  
infantoto@erols.com

New York's Channel 9 did indeed show a censored version of *KING KONG* on its well-loved *MILLION DOLLAR MOVIE*. Missing was some of the footage of Fay Wray's dress being peeled off by Kong, plus a few short interludes of the giant ape stomping and chomping natives and native New Yorkers, and the famous scene of Kong plucking the wrong woman from her bed and blithely tossing her away.

Just wanted to post a note about the new issue of *Scarlet Street*! Splendid! Loved the interviews with Ms. Wray, etc., and was impressed with the high percentage of Sherlockian material this issue. And the article on *THE MOST DANGEROUS GAME*, too, even if it didn't touch on the many times it was used on TV series like *GET SMART*.

I was also pleased to see such a nice mention of *Sherlock Holmes and the Titanic Tragedy* by William Seil, a friend of mine and a member of the local scion society Sound of the Baskervilles.

Stu Shiffman  
roscoe@halcyon.com

Yes, I too enjoyed the David Manners interview very much (SS #26), as well as the current Fay Wray one—wotta dame, oui?—but I feel the Roddy McDowall interview was much too short. He spoke not at all of his time with the *COLUMBO* series, for example, wherein he played a spoiled mad bomber on a cable car with Peter Falk, believing one of his own bombs about to explode. Also, I would've loved to hear him expound a bit more on his involvement with *FRIGHT NIGHT*, *NIGHT GALLERY*, et. al. He's been around awhile and I really think his well of anecdotes is far from dry.

The inclusion of *CURSE OF THE CAT PEOPLE* in #27 is a superb touch. This film easily has some of the best black and white photography of any film of its time. If anyone out there hasn't watched its play of light and shadow, they are missing a major treat.

Speaking of favorite films, have you all at *Scarlet Street* given your inimitable treatment to the Hammer film, *FIVE MILLION YEARS TO EARTH*—otherwise known as *QUATERMASS AND THE PIT*? If so, please tell me which back issue I need to order—if not, well, for God's sake, why not? This is one of the best low-budget science fiction films ever made and well deserving of an exegesis. Youse guys is great—keep it up—much love!

Peter F. Johnson  
Petdix@aol.com

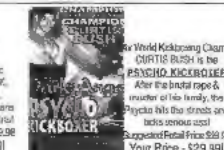
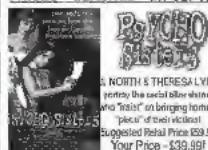
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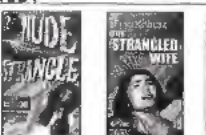


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"My God," I gasped. "I've traveled 100 years into the future!"

I sat up in bed, wide awake, and missed out on any other revelations the future held.

I know the future will not be bringing us any more issues of *Castle of Frankenstein*, alas. What an education that magazine was for me! No other magazine introduced me to so many wonderful films, books, artists, personalities, things that for a boy growing up on the southwest side of Chicago—far from civilization, far from simple literacy—were completely unheard of. But then, we do have *Scarlet Street*, which does a fine job of keeping up the tradition. And it is nowhere near as famous at missing deadlines as *CoF* in its heyday. In comparison, you are as reliable as *The New York Times*.

Richard Chwedyk  
Chicago, IL

As reliable as the *Times*, but less stodgy, we trust. Actually, we've only missed two deadlines, and the issue you're holding now—the first in our bimonthly schedule—has come out right on time. Hey, even we're surprised!

Greetings from KY (the state, not the lubricant). You've really got a good thing going here. I had the good fortune to spend the day with Forry Ackerman on his 81st B-Day. We saw *MIDNIGHT IN THE GARDEN OF GOOD AND EVIL* in a neighborhood theater that night,

and I learned more about the industry from a fan's perspective than any mortal man. He speaks really highly of your publication, and as an enthusiast from the sixties, if Forrest J sez it's so then it's so. So, please disregard the bull about your alleged "agenda" and carry on.

I live in an area so starved for genre info that we're still waiting for another Chris Lee/Peter Cushing *Dracula* film. You are truly a beacon in a region where, even after the divorce, we're still brother and sister. (If you know what I mean and I think you do, thus spake Joe Bob Briggs.)

Your magazine's closest competitor, IMHO, is *Monsterscene*. Between the two pub's genuine love for the genre, plus the quality (editorial, stills, glossy print) of the finished product, it has to be a "photo finish."

Thank you for your time, your magazine and your connection to a world that has kept me alive since my parents let their seven year-old stay up late to see *KING KONG* in 1968. I've not been normal since, and I place part of the blame on periodicals like yours, *Famous Monsters*, *Fantastic Monsters of the Films*, and *The Monster Times*.

Don Stewart

creature@commandnet.net

*Monsterscene* is one of our favorites of the mags currently on the stands, and to be favorably compared to such legendary 'zines as *Famous Monsters*, *Fantastic*

*Monsters of the Films*, *The Monster Times*, and (in a previous letter) *Castle of Frankenstein* is very high praise, indeed! And it's more than a little gratifying to know that the One and Only Master of Famous Monsters, Forrest J Ackerman, thinks well of us. We certainly think well of him, and the wonderful column he writes for *Scarlet Street*.

Hey, there . . .  
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Gosh, fellas, there's only one thing worries me—when I get Lou's brain, will I still be smart enough to read *Scarlet Street*?

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# the NEWS HOUND



**L**ittle that The Hound can dish out is as terrifying as Tax Season, but as you'll see, Scarlet Readers, your dogged reporter does his damndest

## Me Tarzan, You Mickey

Deep in the jungles of Southern California, Walt Disney Pictures has started production on *TARZAN*, which is scheduled to be its blockbuster release for the Summer of 1999. The House of Mouse pledges that it is emphasizing Edgar Rice Burroughs' original concept of the legendary Ape Man, which few movie versions have done thus far. Disney animators Kevin Lima and Chris Buck are sharing directorial duties, and are combining 3-D computer-generated backgrounds with traditionally-animated characters. Disney brass have stated that *TARZAN* will be more dramatic and serious than some of their recent features—closer to *POCAHONTAS* in tone—and that the animal characters will be more realistic (despite the fact, of course, that they talk, sing, etc).

Actor Tony Goldwyn, grandson of Hollywood mogul Samuel Goldwyn, provides the voice of Tarzan, and British actress Minnie Driver (*GOOD WILL HUNTING*) portrays Jane. Others in the vocal cast include Brian Blessed as Clayton, Tarzan's human dad; Nigel Hawthorne as Porter, Jane's father; Wayne Knight of *SEINFELD* as Tantor the elephant; Rosie O'Donnell as Tarzan's ape friend Terkoz; and Glenn Close as Kala, Tarzan's adoptive ape mother. (This the second time Close has lent her voice to a Tarzan movie: she redubbed Andie MacDowell as Jane in *GREYSTOKE*, much to Miss MacDowell's mortification.)

MILLENNIUM man Lance Henriksen is rumored to be voicing the ape leader Kerchak—no relation to Carl Kolchak.

Alan Silvestri, composer for the *BACK TO THE FUTURE* films, will provide the dramatic score, and pop star Phil Collins will write the songs that make the whole jungle sing.

While we wait for the Disney version, Warner Bros. has jumped the elephant gun with its live-action adventure *TARZAN AND THE LOST CITY* (See elsewhere in this issue for coverage). . . Finally hitting the screens this month is the long-delayed Dimension thriller *NIGHT WATCH*, starring Ewan McGregor, Patricia Arquette, and everybody's favorite nut case, Brad Dourif. Also stalking theaters in April is MGM's *SPECIES 2*, with

Natasha Henstridge starring as a kinder, gentler alien babe.

*GODZILLA* (TriStar) and *DEEP IMPACT* (DreamWorks/Paramount) flatten filmgoers in May, the former already generating as much prerelease chatter as that film nobody said would succeed, the one about the sinking ship; joining them will be Warners' animated fantasy *QUEST FOR CAMELOT*, TriStar's *MASK OF ZORRO*, and a possible reissue of that Dimension golden oldie *SCREAM 2*. Disney's new animated *MULAN*, based on a Chinese folk tale, opens in June, as does the aliens-on-a-boat thriller *VIRUS* (Universal), and the aliens-took-my-sister melodrama *THE X FILES: FIGHT THE FUTURE* (20th Century Fox)



**A bowler, an umbrella, and leather means THE AVENGERS, but this time it's Ralph Fiennes and Uma Thurman as John Steed and Emma Peel.**

## Have Bowler, Will Travel

Fans of top professional John Steed and talented amateur Emma Peel have June 26th targeted on their calendars. That's when, for better or worse, the big-screen version of *THE AVENGERS* hits the cinemas. For one, the original Mr. Steed Patrick Macnee, seems optimistic. Aside from playing a cameo role in the Warner Bros. feature, he's promoting a new memoir, *The Avengers and Me*, to be published this month. Additionally, all the original episodes from the sixties have been digitally remastered, and will be released to video stores at the same time as the movie hits the theaters

## Future Creature Features

Generation Y kids get their brains drained in MGM's *DISTURBING BEHAVIOR*, shot in Vancouver by *X-FILES* and *MILLENNIUM* director David Nutter. It's sort of a "Stepford Dudes" kind of thing. . . Annette Bening and Aidan Quinn star in *BLUE VISION* (DreamWorks), about a woman whose newfound psychic power connects her to a killer. Ace Irish actor Stephen Rea (*THE CRYING GAME*) also stars. . . More ESP thrills are in store in Hollywood Pictures' *THE SIXTH SENSE*, which may star Bruce Willis as a psychologist whose eight-year-old patient can see a frightening, hidden world. . . Kenneth Branagh eases his marital woes in an *ALIEN LOVE TRIANGLE* (Dimension), along with terrestrial temptresses played by Heather Graham and Courteney Cox.

## Honey, I Blew Up the TV

The Tracy family take to the skies once again in *THUNDERBIRDS 2000*, a new feature film based on Gerry and Sylvia Anderson's much-loved "Supermarionation" UK TV series from the sixties. Peter Hewitt, director of the recent fantasy film *THE BORROWERS*, is slated to take on this update, which may be completely animated on computer, à la *TOY STORY* and Disney's upcoming holiday release *A BUG'S LIFE*. That may snip the strings of a lot of baby-boomer fans—your Hound included—who'll miss those endearingly jittery marionette moves.

Don't panic! Hollywood Pictures is planning a big-screen version of Douglas Adams' *HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY*. Director Jay Roach (*AUSTIN POWERS*) will collaborate with Adams on the screenplay. Feature versions of *THE JETSONS* and *SPEED RACER* are back in development, as well as a live-action adaptation of the Japanese cartoon series *SAILOR MOON*, with Geena Davis as producer and star. And just when you thought you got rid of the blues, Universal may be planning a comeback for the *SMLRFS*.

It's been announced before—and it'll probably be announced again—but Dan Curtis has plans to transform his classic series *DARK SHADOWS* and TV movie *THE NIGHT STALKER* into feature films. The original *DARK SHADOWS* ran from January 1966 through April 1971, was followed by a short-lived television revival in 1991. *THE NIGHT*

*Continued on page 14*



## THE X-FILES

Fox Video

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Vol. Thirteen: "The Blessing Way"/  
"Paper Clip"

Vol. Fourteen: "War of the Coprophages"/  
"Clyde Bruckman's Final Repose"

Vol. Fifteen: "Nisei"/"731"

In the latest crop of X-FILES episodes released to laserdisc, more pieces of the overarching paranormal puzzle fit into place while more are left tantalizingly (and predictably) missing. Four key "mythology arc" shows are included in this bunch, plus a pair of top-drawer stand-alone tales from ace scripter Darin Morgan.

Written by series creator Chris Carter, "The Blessing Way" and "Paper Clip" are the concluding parts of a trilogy begun with the previous episode, "Anasazi." FBI Agent Fox Mulder (David Duchovny) has discovered a railroad car on a Navajo reservation in New Mexico which has been buried by shadowy government forces to conceal its cargo—scores of "alien" dead bodies. Mulder's nicotine-riddled nemesis Cancer Man and his paramilitary minions tracked the agent to the site and firebombed the car with our hero trapped inside. A fatal fry-up? Of course not. In "The Blessing Way," titled after a Navajo chant of healing, a near-dead Mulder is found near the smoldering wreckage by his Indian confidantes, who perform the mystical ceremony in an attempt to revive him.

While Mulder floats in a Navajo never-never land awaiting his resuscitation, his vivacious yet pensive partner Agent Dana Scully (Gillian Anderson), is in the thick of the action. She gets roughed up by Cancer Man's goons searching for a digital tape containing proof of the conspiracy, meets Cancer Man's boss, the "Well-Manicured Man" (Sir John Neville), who warns her to beware of assassination; and accidentally discovers a small implant behind her neck—a computer chip inserted during her abduction (detailed in the previous episodes "Ascension" and "One Breath"). This nasty chip will soon prove to be quite a problem for our auburn-haired heroine.

In "Paper Clip," Scully and a magically-restored Mulder enlist the expertise of The Lone Gunmen—the Three Stooges of conspiratorial paranoia—to identify a photograph of former Nazi scientist Victor Klemper (007 villain Walter Gotell). Mulder believes that Klemper is being harbored by a covert government agency to continue his grim genetic experiments, creating E.T.-human hybrids with alien DNA. "Paper Clip," possibly the best of all the "myth arc" episodes, brings this trilogy to an exciting close with revelations that tie the activities of Cancer Man and his smoky con-

spirators directly to the bloodlines of Scully and Mulder.

What a treat to have "Clyde Bruckman's Final Repose" and "War of the Coprophages" paired on one disc. These two gems by Darin Morgan demonstrate why he's the most popular writer among X-Philes. "Bruckman," in fact, could very well be the series' finest episode. A troubled young man visits a series of fake psychics, ending his sessions by throttling and eviscerating them. When insurance salesman Clyde Bruckman (Peter Boyle, in an Emmy-winning performance) discovers the latest victim in his dumpster, he calls the authorities and is interviewed by Mulder and Scully. Mulder discovers that Bruckman is a genuine (though reluctant) psychic, and persuades him to help catch the killer. Morgan's script, with its deft and affecting blend of comedy and tragedy, won the 1996 Emmy for best dramatic teleplay.

"Coprophages," with its humorous banter and over-the-top sci-fi plot, has the breezy feel of an AVENGERS episode. Agent Mulder visits a Massachusetts town that's in a panic over fatal attacks—apparently perpetrated by killer cockroaches. He consults Scully from the crime scenes in a series of dryly hilarious phone conversations that are the highlight of the show. Viewers will also have fun spotting the episode's many SF film references and in-jokes.

Chris Carter considers the episodes "Nisei" and "731" to be "the backbone of the show." This two-parter, which delves further into the alien-government conspiracy story, repeats many of the themes from "Paper Clip." Despite the

# INSIDE THE X FILES

fact that they tread on familiar ground, these are exciting entries filled with action scenes and intriguing locations befitting a feature film. A man who sends Mulder an "alien autopsy" videotape is later found murdered. His assassin leaves a trail that leads Mulder to discover what may be living proof of alien-human hybridization... or is it all a deadly trap? While Mulder plays action hero—leaping from a cargo ship and jumping onto the roof of a moving train—Scully faces quieter, graver trials as she meets a group of women claiming to recognize her as a fellow alien abductee. And they all have those same funny implants in their necks...

Be entertained/fascinated/frustrated all over again by this group of choice episodes, which typically leave as many mysteries unsolved as questions answered. But let's face it, fans—it wouldn't be THE X-FILES otherwise, would it? The picture quality and surround stereo on these disks are uniformly excellent, and the multiple chapter stops can help you keep track of the endless conspiracies. And trust no one... not even Chris Carter himself, who appears before each episode to give plot spoilers and background info.

—John J. Mathews

Some X-Philes prefer the "mythology arc" episodes of their favorite sci-fi show, while others turn to programs that stand on their own. The latest batch of X-FILES lasers feature four of the former and two of the latter.



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# HERCULES UNCLOSETED

"Hercules sought him madly everywhere, shouting his name and plunging deeper and deeper into the forest away from the sea. He had forgotten the Fleece, and the Argos and his comrades; everything except Hylas."

—Edith Hamilton, *Mythology*

So what was the real honest-to-gods reason for Hercules' dumping ship and abandoning the adventuresome quest for the Golden Fleece, after first announcing his intention to remain on a lonely, desolate island to search for his missing shipmate, Hylas? After all, in the classic fantasy film *JASON AND THE ARGONAUTS* (1963), Herc and Hylas (Nigel Green and John Crawford, pictured above next to a photo of filmdom's most famous musclem, Steve Reeves) barely know each other. In Greek mythology, however, the twosome were more than just good buddies, they were . . . well, the Greeks had a word for 'em.

Ray Harryhausen would not be amused.

In fact, Ray Harryhausen would probably be quietly outraged. Several years ago, during a ride from his hotel

to the Chiller Convention in Hackensack, New Jersey, Harryhausen made some considerably conservative pronouncements, including one that went something like this: "If they were to remake *JASON AND THE ARGONAUTS* today, they'd probably have all the sailors be gay."

Lost on the master stop-motion animator was the irony that, by doing so, they'd be making the film considerably more accurate—or at least closer to the myths that inspired his own work of cinematic artistry.

In his column in *The Record* (June 24, 1997), a New Jersey newspaper, Bill Ervolino, inspired by the then-current Disney cartoon *HERCULES*, opened the closet door and out tumbled the Mighty Herc and his boyish better half, Hylas. Wrote Ervolino:

"Hylas, a character you won't see in the Disney film, is very much in evidence in the timeless tales of ancient Greece, where he is alternately described as Hercules' page, armor-bearer, good friend, and—Great Zeus!—his lover. The character occasionally appears as a buddy to Hercules in some modern-day adaptations of the myths, including the Saturday matinee classic *JASON AND THE ARGONAUTS*. In that film, after Hylas bests Hercules at discus, Hercules picks the youth up and carries him off. But, hey, you know how guys are . . ."

In *The MacMillan Illustrated Encyclopedia of Myths and Legends* (MacMillan, 1989), Arthur Cotterell gives us the true lowdown.

*Continued on page 74*

## NEWS HOUND

*Continued from page 12*

*STALKER* spawned a Curtis-produced sequel, *THE NIGHT STRANGLER*, and a one-season series with which the producer had no connection. Curtis is collaborating with Steve Feke and the (I am) legendary Richard Matheson on the *NIGHT STALKER* script (Matheson did the original) and going solo on *SHADOWS*. No word on whether the cast of *SHADOWS*' 1991 revival, which included Ben Cross, Roy Thinnes, Jean Simmons, and Barbara Steele, will return from their TV graves.

### Comic Relief

Although it seems to The Hound almost sacrilegious to imagine, Tim Burton starts production in May on *SUPERMAN REBORN*, with Nicolas Cage playing the Man of Steel. While we shake our heads at that casting choice, Michael Keaton has reportedly confirmed that he'll put in an appearance as Batman in the feature (*Scarlet Street*'s Reditor has been shaking his head at that casting choice since the first Batmovie.) Internet movie maven Harry Knowles reports that writer-director-comic fan Kevin Smith, who wrote the screenplay for the new *SUPERMAN* film, has also been ap-

proached by Warner Bros. to script another DC Comics-based feature: *GREEN LANTERN*. No word on which one of the many Lantern characters will take the emerald spotlight . . .

The unsinkable James Cameron still has hopes of floating his *SPIDER-MAN* feature, for which he's recently completed a screenplay. His *TITANIC* teen star Leonardo DiCaprio is his first choice to portray Peter Parker, a.k.a. Spidey. The only problem: Cameron doesn't own the rights to the Marvel Comics character, and Marvel itself is being kept busy in bankruptcy court. Quite a tangled web . . . Top-selling European horror comic *Dylan Dog* will be the basis of *DEAD OF NIGHT*, a planned Dimension Pictures release about a private eye who investigates supernatural cases. *Dylan Dog* already spawned the recent cult favorite *CEMETERY MAN* starring Rupert Everett.

### Updates Aplenty

Former (and future?) Batman Michael Keaton will likely be joined by up-and-coming "Little Darth Vader" Jake Lloyd in *FROST* (Warner Bros.), in which no-good papa Keaton dies and returns as the famed Frosty the Snowman to look after little Jake. Hey, kid, careful where you stick that corn-cob pipe . . . Zenter-

tainment News reports that Will Smith will be joined by Kevin Kline as Artemus Gordon and Kenneth Branagh as the lead villain in Warners' *THE WILD WILD WEST*. Zen also reports that Lawrence Fishburne will star as gay private eye Pharoah Love in the upcoming adaptation of George Baxt's sixties-set mystery *A Queer Kind of Death* . . . Doc Bruce Banner gets belted again. Universal has reportedly cancelled plans to bring *THE INCREDIBLE HULK* to the big screen. Ditto for 20th Century Fox's *TERMINATOR 3*—James Cameron says he's not interested. So that sinks it.

### Television Terrors

Returning this fall for at least one more season are *THE X-FILES* (Fox), *BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER* (Warners) and the syndicated sci-fi favorites *EARTH FINAL CONFLICT* and *STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE* . . . This fall will also bring two ABC thrillers adapted from novels: *MR. MURDER*, a miniseries based on the Dean Koontz novel, and a television of Michael Crichton's *THE ANDROMEDA STRAIN*, which the network hopes to spin off into a series "Biohazard of the week?" Why not?

*Continued on page 16*



Casper Van Dien, who plays the King of the Apes in the upcoming Dieter Geissler/Alta Vista Production **TARZAN AND THE LOST CITY** distributed by Warner Bros., has been giving a number of interviews in which he flippantly refers to himself as "running around naked through the jungle," but don't get your hopes too high, hunk watchers. Before you imagine Lord Greystoke has snagged his apparel of choice on a jutting branch or lost it to a lusty lion, be advised that one man's "naked" is another's "casual dress." Tarzan retains his loincloth in his first theatrical feature since **GREYSTOKE: THE LEGEND OF TARZAN, LORD OF THE APES** (1984), but that's nude enough for Van Dien, it appears.

Van Dien, who attended high school in Ridgewood, New Jersey (just a stone's throw from the Glen Rock offices of *Scarlet Street*), is best known to genre fans as the star of **STARSHIP TROOPERS**. The film's military atmosphere came naturally to the actor. "My father was a commander and pilot in the navy for 20 years. My grandfather was a marine infantryman in World War II and my other grandfather was a doctor in the Navy."

First deciding to pursue his military roots, Van Dien was bitten by the acting bug after transferring from Ridgewood High to the Admiral Farragut Academy. "My parents got me involved in the arts. When I was seven, they took me to see a stage production of **WEST SIDE STORY** and I fell in love. Then they started taking me to Broadway and Off-Broadway shows all the time. There I was in military school where guys would be doing karate kicks and reenacting battle scenes they saw in war films, and I'm like a dancing fool singing, "When you're a Jet, you're a Jet all the way . . ."

Filmmaker Stanley Canter, who had coproduced **GREYSTOKE** with Hugh Hudson, immediately began to envision a sequel after that film's successful opening. It had taken Canter 12 years to get **GREYSTOKE** on film, however, and it would be another 14 before a follow up got off the ground (and into the tress, as it were).

Though not a direct sequel, since the conclusion of the previous picture had sent Tarzan back to Africa, **TARZAN AND THE LOST CITY** more or less picks up where **GREYSTOKE** left off. In 1913 England, John Clayton, Lord Greystoke, is preparing to marry his beloved Jane Porter (Jane March) when, through the magic of an African shaman, he suddenly has a vision of the destruction of his jungle home. Tarzan returns to Africa, where he squares off against some ruthless soldiers of fortune bent on discovering and looting the legendary Lost City of Opar.

In the past, the mention of Opar in a Tarzan tale has meant one thing: the sultry appearance of La, treacherous Queen of the Lost City, and her apelike male subjects. Unfortunately, the "other woman" of Edgar Rice Burroughs' famous stories doesn't even rate a mention in the official synopsis of **TARZAN AND THE LOST CITY**, which does, however, make brief reference to the departed "spirits of Opar." Well, spirits are all well and good, but honestly, what's a Lost City without a Queen?

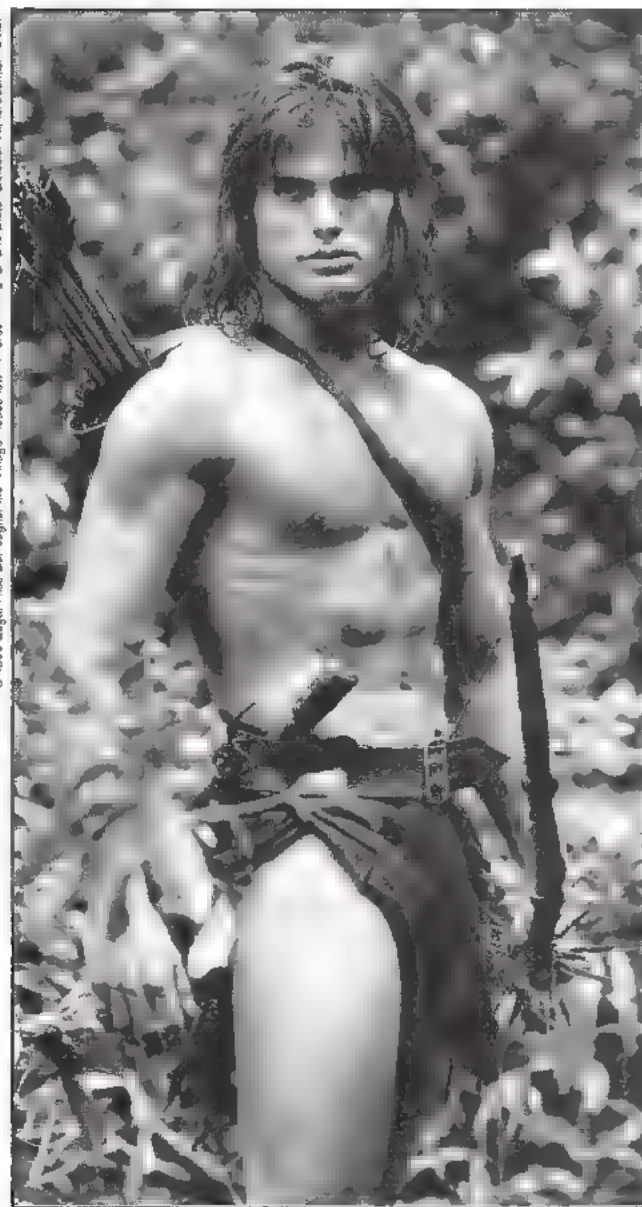
La-less it may be, but Canter insists that the picture is not going to want for thrills and derring-do. "I structured the story on the action serials of the past, as I wanted to make a high adventure film with a really interesting love story. Even though the story takes place in 1913, our Tarzan is more forward-looking and he is matched with a thoroughly modern Jane, breaking with previous Janes. Ours is no wilting wallflower." (I imagine Maureen O'Sullivan might have something to say about that . . .)

Van Dien performed the majority of his own stunts as Tarzan, not without mishap. "We were shooting in the bamboo grove when I approached a baby elephant, intending to scratch its head. The elephant charged me, lifting me about four feet up and throwing me back several feet to the ground. It shook me up, but I only got a couple of bruises."

As for the required vine swinging: "I'm lucky that I'm of average height and build. But let's get real—the chimps are the only ones that can do this without the benefit of a personal trainer."

Yes, and they do it naked

Drew Sullivan



## TARZAN AND THE Lost Loincloth



## NEWS HOUND

Continued from page 14

SCREAM sultan Wes Craven and AMERICAN GOTHIC creator Shaun Cassidy may bring their talented talons to television this fall. The Fox network has ordered a pilot for the duo's proposed series HOLLYWEIRD, in which a young pair of cable TV producers investigate the macabre side of L.A. It sounds sort of like TV 101 meets THE X-FILES... A new six-hour miniseries adaptation of Frank Herbert's *Dune* goes into production soon for The Sci Fi Channel.

Saturday mornings will be more Marvelous on the UPN network this fall when they premiere the brand new cartoon series X-MEN, SPIDER-MAN, and THE INCREDIBLE HULK & FRIENDS, which will replay some of the vintage sixties FANTASTIC FOUR and IRON MAN cartoons.

Sam Neill, whom you may remember vaguely as the lead human in JURASSIC PARK, swaps mastodons for medieval magic as he portrays the title role in NBC's four-hour miniseries MERLIN. Supporting Neill in various doublets and bodices are Isabella Rossellini, Miranda Richardson, Helena Bonham Carter, Martin Short, Rutger Hauer, Sir John Gielgud, and James Earl Jones. The two-part premiere April 26 and 27. Another upcoming NBC telefilm, BRAVE NEW WORLD, based on Aldous Huxley's cautionary science-fiction tale, stars Leonard Nimoy and Peter Gallagher, and premieres May 3rd.

For those with an artistic bent, there's good news on the horizon: Universal and NBC have joined forces to produce a two-hour pilot with a familiar title: NIGHT GALLERY. With luck, a one-hour anthology series will follow. Stephen King and Clive Barker have been approached to contribute stories for the pilot. The original NIGHT GALLERY, hosted by Rod Serling (who—poor man—may be brought back via computer technology), was the launching pad for the career of a director named Spielberg.

### The Home Video Vault

Already stocked on your local home-video rental racks are the sci-fi thrillers ALIEN RESURRECTION (Fox) and MIMIC (Dimension), the teen screamer I SAW WHAT YOU DID LAST SUMMER (Columbia-TriStar), the charming fantasy FAIRY TALE: A TRUE STORY (Paramount), Hollywood noir winner L.A. CONFIDENTIAL (Warners), and the serial killer drama KISS THE GIRLS (Paramount). All are priced for rental... Batgirl falls into the cold clutches of Dr. Victor Fries in the much-praised direct-to-video animated adventure BATMAN AND MR. FREEZE: SUBZERO (Warners, \$19.95)... Fox Lorber has released the

unrated version of Dario Argento's 1977 classic SUSPIRIA in a gorgeously gory widescreen edition for \$19.95... The groovy spy spoof AUSTIN POWERS INTERNATIONAL MAN OF MYSTERY (New Line) is now available at the bargain price of \$14.95. Does that make you randy, baby?

Kino on Video has released three more hardboiled classics in their film noir series: Fritz Lang's HANGMEN ALSO DIE, Anthony Mann's RAILROADED, and THE STRANGE LOVE OF MARTHA IVERS starring Barbara Stanwyck and Elizabeth Scott (hence the title?)... More vintage films noir are premiering on video from Universal: the Cornell Woolrich-penned whodunit BLACK ANGEL, Lang's YOU AND ME and MINISTRY OF FEAR, and two crackerjack thrillers directed by Robert Siodmak—PHANTOM LADY and THE KILLERS.

Sir Derek Jacobi returns as that other cowed crime fighter BROTHER CADFAEL in three new feature-length Medieval mysteries: "A Raven in the Foregate," "The Rose Rent," and "A Morbid



C'mon, would you trust a child with crazed MOMMY Patty McCormack? Brinke Stevens seems to have her doubts.

Taste for Bones." (Acorn Media, \$19.95 each)... Those razzing robots of MYSTERY SCIENCE THEATER 3000 are back to heckle two more B-movies: Roger Corman's GUNSLINGER, starring Marshal Beverly Garland, and the stupefyingly idiotic MANOS: THE HANDS OF FATE. Rhino Video offers them at \$19.95 each, or in a three-pack with an MST3K blooper reel for \$49.95.

Here's a pair of Mother's Day gifts that Norman Bates would love: the Max Allan Collins psycho thrillers MOMMY and MOMMY 2: MOMMY'S DAY, both starring Patty (THE BAD SEED) McCormack. They're available in May in widescreen collector's editions for \$19.95 each. Max is a diehard *Scarlet Street* fan, so you can be sure he's got the right stuff.

Also hovering on the horizon in May will be Steven Spielberg's CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND: THE COLLECTOR'S EDITION. This is the third version to be released to home-

video, one that Mr. Spielberg says he wanted all along. Some scenes from the 1980 "Special Edition" have been removed—most notably the interior scenes of the mothership—and some from the original release have been restored. Look for this new 137-minute release on VHS and laserdisc (but not on DVD).

Laser collector alert: MCA has reduced its prices on nearly 500 titles. (You heard right: 500!) Feature films newly priced at \$19.95 include THE BRIDES OF DRACULA, THE MAN WHO KNEW TOO MUCH (1956), THE SEVEN PERCENT SOLUTION, and the Universal horror classics FRANKENSTEIN, DRACULA, WEREWOLF OF LONDON, BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN, MURDERS IN THE RUE MORGUE, SON OF FRANKENSTEIN, and THE MUMMY. Hitchcock thrillers SABOTEUR, MARNIE, ROPE, THE TROUBLE WITH HARRY, and FAMILY PLOT can now be dug up at a mere \$24.95 each, and you can ogle REAR WINDOW, TOPAZ, and PSYCHO for \$29.95 a pop. So, hop

### The World Weird Web

Top British radio dramatist Bert Coules maintains a marvelous website on his homepage devoted to the BBC's Sherlock Holmes radio series, for which he is the head scriptwriter (<http://free-space.virgin.net/~bertcoules/sh-home.html>)... Everything you always wanted to know about the insidious Dr. Fu Manchu (after perusing SS #24, of course) is lurking at Lawrence Knapp's "Page of Fu Manchu" ([www.rjn.net/~knapp/FuManchu.html](http://www.rjn.net/~knapp/FuManchu.html)).

Mississippian Boyd Campbell has constructed a website that just may be the Eighth Wonder of the Web World. Visit his wondrous KING KONG site at [www2.netdoor.com/~campbab/kong.html](http://www2.netdoor.com/~campbab/kong.html)... The aforementioned Mr. Campbell and scores of other fright fans will be clamoring at the gates of the 1998 Monster Bash Convention in Monroeville, Pennsylvania from July 19 to 21. Ray Harryhausen, Tom Savini, Ron Chaney, and *Scarlet Street*'s own Forrest J Ackerman are among the guests of horror. Visit the official convention website at <http://www.vnm.wvnet.edu/~ygor/monsbash.html>.

Gone, but never to be forgotten, suspense novelist Lawrence Sanders, cartoonist Antonio ("Spy vs. Spy") Prohaskas, director David Bradley, producers William Alland and Jerry Gershwin, musical director Saul Chaplin, record producer Ben Bagley, cinematographer Stanley Cortez, entertainer Sonny Bono, actors Gene Evans, Lloyd Bridges, Daniel Massey, Mae Questel, Charles Hallahan, Joanna Moore, Marion Bell, Denver Pyle, J.T. Walsh, Helen Westcott, Michael Ballfour, Philip Abbott, Toshiro Mifune, and silent screen star Billie Dove.



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# Crimson Chronicles

by Forrest J Ackerman



**G**loria Stuart! She survived the attack of scarred, bearded, Jameswhalean mad butler Boris Karloff in *THE OLD DARK HOUSE* (1932).

She pleaded in vain with Claude Rains, *THE INVISIBLE MAN*. "Jack! Listen to me! My father knows something about monomane even you don't know! It alters you . . . changes you . . . makes you feel differently!" Rains rants his retort: "Your father? Bah! He has the brain of a tapeworm, a maggot compared to mine!" and he rages on, towering above a cowering "Flora" (Gloria Stuart) to terrify her with his boast that the drugs he took seemed to light up his brain and soon he would have the world groveling at his feet. "Even the moon's frightened of me!" he exulted before a bewildered Gloria in 1933.

She fared better the same year in the remake of the silent 1924 *LAST MAN ON EARTH* (not to be confused with Vincent Price's *LAST MAN ON EARTH* in 1964, based on Richard Matheson's legendary novel *I Am Legend*, remade in 1971 as *THE OMEGA MAN*, starring Charlton Heston, and scheduled for a re-remake). If you've lost the train of thought by now, let's recapitulate: In 1933, Gloria was the girlfriend of the last man on Earth after masculitis had destroyed the male population in *IT'S GREAT TO BE ALIVE* (When You're the Last Man on Earth). She survived a lot of competition, and in fact survived till 1997 to masterfully portray the 100-plus-year-old survivor of the sinking of the ill fated, iceberg-destroyed Titanic, for which she was nominated for an Academy Award. I'd keep my fingers crossed for her—but I find it difficult to type with crossed fingers.

In 1939, I was behind the scenes at the Coconut Grove, guarding the Oscars as they were being given out for *GONE WITH THE WIND*. It was one of the highlight nights of my life. Another occurred over Memorial Day 1993 in Crystal City, VA, when I was onstage in front of hundreds of filmonster fans, and I meddled myself into the valence of Claude Rains as, sitting opposite Gloria Stuart, I took her hand and said, "Flora, my darling. That funny little hat; I always liked it. You've been crying, Flora." And Gloria responded to me with her dialogue from *THE INVISIBLE MAN*. Afterward she said, "You were better than Mr. Rains!" How's that for award-winning

prevarication? But I shall treasure her flattery till my dying day—if I live that long. Don't rush me, Prince Sirks!

I've lived 81 years for this to happen to me for the first time. a 74-year-old clinical psychologist named Cullen, whom I never laid eyes on, died and willed me his fantasy collection! H.P. Lovecraft's legendary hardcover volume *The Outsider* was one of the many treasures (I originally signed up for a copy prior to publication for \$3.50; I've heard of it commanding \$1500 today as a collector's item.) There are pocket-



Claude Rains had first shot at costarring opposite Gloria Stuart in *THE INVISIBLE MAN* in 1933, but our own Uncle 4E got his chance 60 years later at the 1993 FM Con.

book and comic-book sets of Robert E. Howard's Conan and Kull characters, issues of *Weird Tales* magazine as far back as 1932, copies of interstellar siren *Vampirella* for the fella who named her and wrote her origin story (in two hours) I haven't had time yet to open all 40 boxes and discover what other treasures they may contain. Portions of it that duplicate my own collection I've donated to Ion Hobana of Romania, Wiktor Bukato of Poland, Axel Nordin of Sweden, and Andre Norton for her High Hallack retreat library in Tennessee.

Congratulations to James Warren, the publisher who started the whole filmonsterzine genre: he just married his childhood sweetheart, another glorious Gloria!

Satyrday, Memorial Day, in Wichita, KS, the 65th anniversary of *KING KONG* will

be celebrated on one of the country's last surviving Cinerama screens. Ray Bradbury will be in attendance; Ray Harryhausen is winging over from London, and a kid who first saw "The Eighth Wonder of the World!" in 1933 and scores of times since will be with his two aforementioned lifelong friends—namely me, from Kongofornia via Skull Island.

Most recent visitors at the Ackermansion in Horrorwood, Karloffornia: three Bulgarian sci-fi fans, two Transylvanian sisters, and the first fan (female) I've ever met from the Azores. If you're ever in my neighborhood, just give a call to 213-MOON FAN for an appointment to visit the sci-fi shrine. No charge, kids and cameras okay, you can take all the pictures you want—as long as you don't take them off the walls. (Joke over.)

The late pioneering "scientifiction" author Stanton A. Coblenz (late twenties thru mid-forties: *The Sunken World*, *After 12,000 Years*, *Into Plutonian Depths*) before he died instructed me as his agent if any monies were made from his work posthumously, he would wish them donated to a major New York institute for blind children. I checked with Braille and have been pleased to send a check for \$1,000 to a recommended establishment in the Bronx. Foresighted big-hearted Coblenz does a good deed from beyond the grave.

As I conclude this column, I'm about to have three visitors: the wife, daughter, and Sam Sherman himself, the New York based producer who got me my death scene in *DRACULA VS. FRANKENSTEIN* and was the last person to give the late Zita (*THE MUMMY*) Johann a part in a picture.

Sincere thanks to Sean Fernald for the additions to my Frankenstein models . . . to Juan Camacho for the Mexican pocket books of *Dracula* . . . Eric Caidin for the pressbook material from imagi-movies . . . Giovanni Scognamiglio (Turkey) for the copy of his filmonsterzine . . . to Stuart Gardner, Pam Keesey, Axel Nordin (Sweden), Sean Fernald, Ron Borst, Peter Vollmann (Germany/Hawaii), Hajime Ishida (Japan's fabulous *Amazing Movies* magazine), Deborah Painter, Shel Dorf, Dee Bauman, Dick Lynch, Curt Sodmak, for a number of gifts and good deeds.

Till the sun turns crimson again . . .



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# SCREEN...



## and Screen AGAIN!



### Scarlet Street's Laser Review

UNITED ARTISTS SCI-FI MATINEE  
VOLUME 2  
MGM/UA  
Six Sides CLV  
\$99.95

At long last, after years of postponement and delay, MGM/UA has finally released their second volume of vintage science-fiction laser discs. The initial boxed set, containing *THE MAN FROM PLANET X* (1951), *RED PLANET MARS* (1952), *THE MONSTER THAT CHALLENGED THE WORLD* (1957), and *IT! THE TERROR FROM BEYOND SPACE* (1958), was released in 1994, and became an instant classic amongst lovers of fifties sci-fi. We can blame an assortment of pesky legal entanglements for the delay of the long awaited follow-up, but now that it's out on the market, the final result has made the wait worth it.

Featured in this three-platter set are uniformly fine transfers of *THE MAGNETIC MONSTER* (1953), *THE QUATERMASS EXPERIMENT* (1955; released in the United States as *THE CREEPING UNKNOWN*, 1956), *THE BEAST OF HOLLOW MOUNTAIN* (1956), and *INVISIBLE INVADERS* (1959). While there are detractors who grouse that the titles collected herein do not, for the most part, live up to those in the initial collection, the less finicky among us remain ever grateful for sparkling new transfers of any rare material, regardless of its debatable merit.

*THE MAGNETIC MONSTER* typifies the style of the science-fiction films Ivan Tors produced during this period, including *RIDERS TO THE STARS* and *GOG* (both 1954). It is slow paced and excessively talky, emphasizing scientific fact and futuristic technological gadgetry over outlandish plot premises. What makes *THE MAGNETIC MONSTER* superior to Tors' other works is its

compelling story, told in the low-key, semidocumentary style that had gained audience favor at the time. Richard Carlson lends his customary conviction and sense of urgency to the role of an investigator employed by the Los Angeles-based Office of Scientific Investigation. When a brilliant physicist unwittingly unleashes on mankind an unstable new element with awesome magnetic powers, Carlson and his colleagues struggle to thwart the ever-growing radioactive menace before it pulls the earth out of its orbit and sends it hurtling through space.

To cut corners, Tors and director/cowriter Curt Siodmak lifted an exciting sequence from a 1934 German thriller, *GOLD*, and utilized it in *THE MAGNETIC MONSTER*'s suspenseful climax. (Most contemporary critics praised the film for its exemplary special visual effects, little realizing the cinematic sleight of hand that was at work.) Effectively contrasting the story's sensational aspects is a warm, intimate plot thread involving the eagerly anticipated arrival of Carlson and wife Jean Byron's first child.

Arguably the best sci-fi/horror film Hammer Studios has ever produced, *THE QUATERMASS EXPERIMENT* is the undisputed gem of the collection. The first of three British films dealing with the scientific exploits of rogue scientist Professor Bernard Quatermass (*QUATERMASS 2/ENEMY FROM SPACE* and the overrated *FIVE MILLION YEARS TO EARTH* followed in 1957 and 1968, respectively), *THE QUATERMASS EXPERIMENT* stands up to repeated viewings and is compulsively watchable. Based on the live television serial by Nigel Kneale, the story concerns the efforts of Quatermass (excellently played by Brian Donlevy) to solve the mystery of an alien

life-form that has taken over the body of the lone survivor of a bungled space voyage. Val Guest's taut direction, Richard Landau's literate script, and the fine performances of the supporting cast, particularly Richard Wordsworth as the blighted astronaut and Jack Warner as a down-to-earth, Bible-reading police inspector, make amends for the pitifully insufficient special effects, namely the misshapen human/vegetable/animal hybrid the doomed astronaut has become. The laser transfer contains approximately three minutes of footage heretofore excised from State-side prints (including a startling glimpse of the creature peering through the shrubbery outside a London zoo).

Presented in its initial theatrical 2:35 1 widescreen aspect ratio, *THE BEAST OF HOLLOW MOUNTAIN* has never looked better on the home screen. The Nassour Brothers bought the rights to Willis O'Brien's pet idea, but couldn't afford the services of the master animator himself. Thus, a "brand new" screen technique dubbed Regiscope (a catchy name for model replacement animation) was utilized. Shot entirely in picturesque Mexico, *THE BEAST OF HOLLOW MOUNTAIN* devotes the lion's share of its running time to a routine Wild West storyline, which has honest ranchers Guy Madison and Carlos Rivas pitted against corrupt Mexican cattle baron Eduardo Noriega, than it does to the Allosaurus-like title character. There are a few compensations: often striking Deluxe color compositions, an eerie, unsettling atmosphere rooted in native superstition; nice local flavor; and a sensitive subplot involving a drunken farmhand and his neglected, motherless son (well-played by Pasquel Garcia Pena and Mario Navarro, respectively). Patience has its own rewards—the Beast's much-anticipated appearance in the movie's rousing last quarter is definitely worth the wait.

By a wide margin, Edward L. Cahn's *INVISIBLE INVADERS* is the least satisfying entry of the collection. I recall see-



ing this kiddie show favorite back in the early sixties, and remember the eeriness I experienced at the sight of roaming masses of alien-possessed corpses in various states of decomposition. (George Romero appropriated this theme and raised it to greater heights of horror in his 1968 landmark *NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD*.) Once the small band of survivors of an invasion from the Moon take refuge in an underground bunker, the action stalls to a virtual halt. One can only wonder how effective this promising material might have been in the hands of a director like Roger Corman or even Paul Landres. (To give the devil his due, Cahn surpassed himself in the chills and suspense department with 1958's *IT! THE TERROR FROM BEYOND SPACE*.) Seen to utter disadvantage are John Agar as a square-jawed military man and Robert Hutton as a cowardly civilian; neither role ingratiates the actors to the audience. John Carradine has what amounts to a cameo role as a remarkably intact victim of a devastating lab explosion. *INVISIBLE INVADERS* is Grade D all the way.

Except for the disappointing, hollow-sounding audio track accompanying *THE QUATERMASS EXPERIMENT*, and the usual print wear, the laser transfers are all first rate, boasting crisp black and white/color images. The only bonus extras accompanying the features are original-release trailers for *THE MAGNETIC MONSTER* and *THE QUATERMASS EXPERIMENT*.

Now, wouldn't it be dandy if MGM/UA remastered such UA horror favorites as *I BURY THE LIVING*, *THE RETURN OF DRACULA*, *THE VAMPIRE, TERROR IS A MAN*, *CURSE OF THE FACELESS MAN*, *THE LOST MISSILE*, and *THE BLACK SLEEP* on laserdisc, and released them in similar packages? Are you listening, MGM/UA?

—John Brunas

## YOUNG SHERLOCK HOLMES

Pioneer  
Two Sides CLV  
\$39.95

London's sanest people are committing suicide in the strangest ways, and Sherlock Holmes sees a connection. Unusual? Not at all, for Holmes was always swift in linking the disparate. But what if the Holmes in question is a teenager? Amblin Entertainment's 1986 effort *YOUNG SHERLOCK HOLMES* seeks to answer that question.

A student at a London boarding school, Holmes (Nicholas Rowe, looking rather convincingly like a young Basil Rathbone) has already gained a reputation for concentration, deductive reasoning, and a touch of eccentricity. His passionate yet detached manner is encouraged by Professor Rath (Anthony Higgins, formerly known as Anthony Corlan of *VAMPIRE CIRCUS* fame), who is, perhaps, too quick to note the youth's singular attributes.

Observing his friend and scientific mentor, retired professor Rupert Waxflatter (Nigel Stock), taking an unusual interest in the suicides, Holmes begins investigating in earnest. Quickly befriending a newly arrived, plump and bespectacled Watson (Alan Cox), the young sleuth proclaims (more than once), "The game's afoot!" With the help



of Watson and girlfriend Elizabeth (Sophie Ward as Waxflatter's niece), the suicides are revealed to be rooted in an Egyptian cult's revenge on a group of British businessmen. Shooting their victims with a hallucinogen-tipped dart, the normally calm gentlemen experience nightmarish hallucinations culminating in their deaths by apparent suicide.

Holmes' adult personality is so familiar and so well developed that I don't envy Nicholas Rowe his role, but I do applaud his effort. Occasional bits of awkwardness, due more often to the direction than any fault of Rowe's, only slightly mar a convincing performance.

The film's greatest strengths lay in its special effects and photography, no small surprise considering that this is a Spielberg/Lucas venture. The hallucination scenes make creative use of Victorian furniture design and cuisine. (I'll not look at a hat rack or a roasted bird the same way again.) An attack by a stained glass figure come to life is especially noteworthy and conjures up memories of Ray Harryhausen's sword-wielding skeletons. The only exception is the too Ewok-cute transformation of French pastries forcing themselves on a plump young Watson. The sets, costumes and photography are first rate, creating a very convincing air of Victorian London.

The film's greatest flaw lays in its very nature—a fabrication of a fabrication. Since Holmes and Watson sprung from the imagination of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, we have only Doyle's writings as history. Although the film begins and ends with an apology acknowledging that much of what we see is indeed fabrication, *YOUNG SHERLOCK HOLMES* tries too hard to introduce, in one small piece of Holmes' life, his most famous trademarks. We see, in three separate events, how Holmes acquired the famous deerstalker, the inverness cape, and the (Canonically incorrect) Meer-

schaum pipe. We see an office-bound Lestrade raised to the grade of inspector by taking Holmes' work as his own. Even the fiction-within-fiction of "Elementary, my dear Watson" is first heard as being addressed to Holmes by Waxflatter. One of the most unsettling fabrications, lacking any foundation in Doyle's writings, is a hallucination induced sequence showing that young Holmes investigated and revealed his father's infidelity to his mother.

The disc is a pleasure to watch. The 1.85:1 image is beautifully transferred, with an especially nice job being done with the warm brown tones that, via wood-paneled interiors, dominate the film. The Dolby Surround Sound lacks a bit of punch in the rear speakers, a problem easily alleviated by a slight increase in rear volume. Fifteen chapter stops and close captioning round out the package.

—Michael Spampinato

## THE LAST VOYAGE

MGM/UA  
Two Sides CLV  
\$39.95

*THE LAST VOYAGE* (1960) was one of the most traumatic films of my childhood. The images of peril and destruction were more harrowing to me than the monsters, mole people, and vampires which populated my youth.

With James Cameron's *TITANIC* debuting in December of 1997, Image decided to release the 1960 film on laserdisc. I wondered what the production would seem like, after a 36-year gap.



Would it still hold water, or would it prove to be an artificial assemblage of miniature props and matte paintings?

As *THE LAST VOYAGE* opens, the luxury liner *Claridon* is merrily steaming ahead. An off-screen narrator with a rather doddering voice warns us that this voyage will never be completed.

Captain George Sanders strolls affably among his complacent passengers. He is already aware that the cabin dining



room is engulfed in flames, even before the completion of the opening credit crawl. The captain is basically a good man driven by an inner perfectionism. "I've never lost a ship, and I'm not losing this one!" he admonishes.

First mate Edmond O'Brien knows better, however. His own father once served for a megalomaniac skipper who desired to establish speed records while inconveniencing the passengers as little as possible. That skipper, of course, had been in command of the *Titanic*!

THE LAST VOYAGE has scarcely begun when calamities begin to manifest themselves. Dorothy Malone is trapped under fallen debris, while husband Robert Stack is nearly crushed by a falling grand piano. The film's first great set piece occurs when their daughter must crawl along a board that lays precariously over a ruptured chasm in the floor. The overhead camera angle accentuates the chasm's depth as well as the narrowness of the board. As the sobbing child inches her way along, the ominous sound of the board splintering was enough to terrify that long-ago theater audience.

The remainder of the movie concerns this nuclear family and their many hazards. Chiseled crew member Woody Strode attempts to aid them, but first mate O'Brien prefers to rescue his own crew. Though there are survivors of this disaster, many lives are lost as well.

THE LAST VOYAGE was photographed with the use of a genuine ship, the famous *Ile de France*. Expansive "sets" were thus provided; miniatures weren't needed, and mattes were only employed for panoramic views of the vessel's submergence.

For the most part, this film survives as a chilling experience. The emphasis has been placed on physical terror, with the cast already endangered as we meet them. The characters of James Cameron's *TITANIC*, conversely, have been meticulously delineated before tragedy occurs (thus lending stronger audience identification).

Director Andrew Stone hasn't always made the most effective choices. The young actress portraying the daughter is a carrottop "Little Orphan Annie" look-alike. The editing is overly frantic, cutting between sequences which would have better maintained their suspense in "real time." The periodic doddering voiceover narration tends to trivialize events we have already witnessed.

In spite of these directorial decisions, the film still manages to offer a riveting white-knuckle adventure. The restrained hysteria of the acting performances brings sufficient pathos to the life-threatening events. The fact that an authentic ship was flooded and partially sunk provides a level of credibility that couldn't have been achieved with models and trick photography.

The MGM/Image laserdisc of THE LAST VOYAGE represents a satisfactory

presentation, given the 1960 vintage. The color is somewhat faded, while the mono sound is occasionally muffled. The picture has been formatted to fit television specifications. Normally a negative, that decision is acceptable in this case. The sheer top to bottom depths of the vessel's damaged interiors have been better preserved by the 1.33-1 standard academy ratio. Neither supplementary extras nor life preservers have been furnished.

John F. Black

## SCREAM AND SCREAM AGAIN Orion

Two Sides CLV  
\$39.95

Scream all you want, no one's going to be able to explain this film to you! This 1969 collaboration between AIP and Amicus brings together horror greats Vincent Price, Christopher Lee, and Peter Cushing. But don't let that fool you into thinking you'll enjoy it.

The film at first presents us with three interweaving plot lines: a man finds himself fading in and out of consciousness in a hospital, horrified to find that every time he wakes another of his limbs is missing; a high ranking gestapo-type in an Eastern European country is involved in some sort of unfathomable espionage and/or power struggle; and in England, young women are found beaten, raped, and, just for good mea-



sure, drained of blood. This last is the major plot thread, and the other two, one keeps hoping, will converge with it eventually.

A young pathologist is curious about the dead women and, Quincy-like, pursues his own line of investigation, in the process getting a lovely young lady friend nearly killed twice, while the police manage to get several of their own beaten and maimed by the prime suspect. The most interesting character in all this mess is chief police inspector Bellaver (Alfred Marks), whose abrasive, sarcastic wit helps carry us along through at least his thread of the film. Trying to decide the contents of a cafeteria sandwich, he complains, "Smells like cheese, looks like ham—ah, I was close; it's chicken!" If this is meant to be symbolic of the plot, it's accurate,

because through most of the film I had no idea what the ingredients were adding up to—Espionage film? Serial-killer film? Vampire film? Body-snatcher film? In the end it's an unpalatable mish-mash, to be tossed away in disgust just as the inspector discards his sandwich. Sometimes it's good that a film keeps you guessing, and you're happy to be made to think. In this case, you get the distinct impression that even the filmmakers didn't know where it was going.

Lee and Cushing are wasted in what amount to cameo appearances. The filmmakers didn't seem to know what to do with them. Neither of their brief roles required such talent to fill them, but it was surely the major selling point of the film. The meatiest and most satisfying role is Marks', while suspected vampire/serial killer/hip dresser Michael Gothard gives his physical all in a very rough chase sequence. Though unchallenged as an actor in this particular role, Gothard would later define the on-screen religious looney in such films as Ken Russell's *THE DEVILS* (1971) and *THE FOUR MUSKETEERS* (1974).

It takes Vincent Price stalking about his mad doctor's operating room to explain the film to us in a literal "tell me doctor" scene. It's not a vampire film, nor a serial killer film, it's... a Frankenstein film! An international group of scientists is building super people out of stolen body parts. I've never understood the need of mad scientists to disassemble perfectly good people to build new people who are invariably defective. We're never satisfactorily told why one of these homebuilt was picking up women and sucking them dry, nor why one of them was killing off his party bosses in Europe, nor why the killer was the only one who needed to suck blood. I could have missed something, I suppose, but I don't feel the film calling me back for a second viewing.

The jacket of this disc informs us that it's been "musically edited" for home video. It hasn't. The transfer is good, the movie recorded in extended play on two sides of one disc, with no extras or trailers included.

—John E. Payne

## THEATRE OF BLOOD MGM/UA Two Sides CLV \$39.95

THEATRE OF BLOOD is one of the most controversial Vincent Price films ever debated on the America Online Horror Message Boards. Now it is presented in a new widescreen edition that will surely satisfy its fans and further inflame its enemies.

Price stars as Edward Lionheart, a Shakespearean actor snubbed by the critics and denied acclaim. After the coveted Best Actor award goes to another recipient, Lionheart interrupts the critics' post-award party by stealing the trophy and plunging to his watery death in the



Thames. Thus ends the disillusioned life of Edward Lionheart—or so the critics think.

Lionheart has actually been rescued by a group of street vagabonds who become his accomplices in executing a brilliantly original revenge plot. With the aid of his daughter, Edwina (Diana Rigg), Lionheart systematically murders the critics, using methods derived from Shakespeare's plays.

Much of the debate concerning this film's merit revolves around sympathy. For whom do we feel it? My own personal answer is—nobody. Anthony Greville-Bell's satirical screenplay attacks both sides evenly. Lionheart is clearly out of his mind, but is he any more dangerous than the snobby critics who murdered his career? Greville-Bell goes even further by taking a crucial cue from the great Elizabethan and Restoration dramatists. The very names of the characters define their personalities. Some examples: Peregrine Devlin (Ian Hendry), Horace Sprout (Arthur Lowe), Chloe Moon (Coral Browne, who later married Price), Meredith Merriew (played to dishy perfection by Robert Morley) and Sergeant Dogg (British comic Eric Sykes)—and let's not forget Lionheart himself, a name that conjures images of a certain warrior whose external courage and resilience hides the internal madness.

Greville-Bell juxtaposes the grotesque and the hysterical with fantastic results. The murder scenes are indeed brutal to watch (most notably, the Titus Andronicus fate suffered by Morley and his two ugly poodles). However, just as Lionheart's gruesome qualities surface in his quiet, reflective moments, there is also a dark, Artaudian humor at work in the murder scenes that cannot be denied. We cringe when Price justifies himself, while at the same time we laugh at the murders. That's brilliant screenwriting, in my opinion.

The new laserdisc from MGM/UA sports a beautiful color reproduction of the American one-sheet artwork on its jacket. The film is letterboxed using a 1.66:1 aspect ratio, which works fine, especially compared to the horribly transferred pan-and-scan VHS version issued by MGM several years back. The digital audio channel features a remastered soundtrack, with the film's music and sound/foley effects isolated on the analog track. The side break is judicious

and the disc is generously indexed with 24 chapters.

Round.ing out the package is a theatrical trailer, the source material scratchy and washed-out beyond belief. The full-frame transfer is so full frame that most of the words get blown off all sides of the screen. Nonetheless, its rarity makes it a nice dessert to such a delicious feast of Shakespearean carnage.

Brooke Perry

#### THE LOST WORLD: JURASSIC PARK Universal Studios Home Video Three Sides CLV \$39.95

As we learned in the original JURASSIC PARK, the best laid strands of DNA oft go astray. THE LOST WORLD is no exception. It turns out the dinosaurs from JURASSIC PARK have been quarantined on a second island. John Hammond (Richard Attenborough) invites Professor Ian Malcolm (Jeff Goldblum) to join a team being sent to the island to study the genetic giants in their "natural habitat." Malcolm, having suffered professional ridicule trying to publicize his first encounter with InGen's creations, refuses until he learns that his girlfriend, paleontologist Sarah Harding (Julianne Moore) is already on the island. Leaving his daughter Kelly (Vanessa Lee Chester) behind, he and the rest of the team arrive at the island and hook up with Harding—and also Kelly, who has stowed away on the boat.

The usual "oohs and aahs" follow as we see some very impressive CGI dinosaurs, including a really stunning encounter with a group of CGI adult stegosaurus intermixed with an animatronic baby steg. The action really gets underway when a horde of InGen helicopters led by a very out-of-place Peter Ludlow (Arliss Howard) and big game hunter Roland Tembo (Pete Postlethwaite), descend on the island, intent on capturing specimens for a San Diego dino-zoo. The usual human-as-snack storyline follows, complete with the rippling pools of water signaling the approach of Tyrannosaurus, a very nicely done

velociraptor encounter, and a remarkable but drawn-out scene showing Ian, Sarah and company in a research van dangling over a precipice. Eventually we end up back on the mainland, where InGen is about to unveil their new zoo, whose sole attraction seems to be a captured baby Tyrannosaurus and its parent. In finest KING KONG style, mixed with fifties sci-fi, the adult Tyrannosaurus escapes and takes a tour of the city.

Truly spectacular computer graphics are the saving grace of a confused plot and occasionally garbled dialogue. (Several times I had to resort to close-captioning to make out the words.) We are treated to some new dinosaurs (the birdlike Compys are especially fascinating) and some very exciting full-body action shots of raptors. Unfortunately, the Spielberg Touch of lightness and affection, present in the original JURASSIC PARK, is totally missing here. The opening scene, extracted from the original novel, sets the tone, with a young girl's parents at odds about her wandering on the beach. As we progress, Ian and Hammond are at odds about Hammond sending Sarah ahead to the island. Ian and Sarah are at odds about Sarah's presence on the island. Ian and Kelly are at odds about everything from good parenting to stowing away. Ludlow and Tembo are at odds over how their mission should be handled. The research team and the InGen team are at odds over capturing the dinos. To further exacerbate things, logic seems to have been thrown out with the Raptor eggs. After commenting on the ability of the Tyrannosaurus to scent up to 10 miles, Harding continues to wear a shirt smeared with a Tyrano-baby's blood. In another scene, a hunter seems compelled to walk hundreds of feet into the woods to simply relieve himself. Needless to say, both situations have their complications.

There is little to fault with the three-sided CLV disc itself. The 1.85:1 image is very clean with excellent color. The Dolby Digital (AC-3) is crisp and well balanced on my pro-logic system, with





truly stunning bass. Forty-five chapter stops simplify finding the dinosaurs throughout the film's 129 minutes. An interesting behind-the-scenes featurette rounds things out.

Suspend disbelief at the door and appreciate *THE LOST WORLD* for its photography and especially its superb dinosaur effects.

—Michael Spampinato

**TWINS OF EVIL**  
Image/Hallmark  
Two Sides CLV  
\$39.99

*TWINS OF EVIL* (1971) was the concluding chapter of Hammer Films' Karnstein trilogy, following *THE VAMPIRE LOVERS* (1970) and *LUST FOR A VAMPIRE* (1971). The Count Karnstein and Mircalla characters were adapted from Irish native J. Sheridan LeFanu's novella *Carmilla*. Published in 1872, LeFanu's explicitly lesbian vampire account predated fellow countryman Bram Stoker's novel *Dracula* by some 25 years.

*TWINS OF EVIL* opens as orphaned twin sisters Maria and Frieda (Mary and Madeline Collinson, respectively) are placed under the "protection" of their sanctimonious uncle Gustav Weil (Peter Cushing). Weil commands a local clan of puritans who apprehend wayward women. The victims then are burned to death for ritual purification.

These holy bonfires take place beneath the shadows of the Castle Karnstein. The count (Damien Thomas) meanwhile employs a procurer to supply him with village wenches for lasciviously lethal entertainment. The effete European aristocrat's bloodlust knows no bounds.

Both Weil and Karnstein derive perverse pleasure from their sadistic subjugation of women. Weil is self-righteous regarding his pursuits, while Karnstein is a contented and unabashed hedonist. Being opposing malevolent forces in their community, the two men often come into venomous conflict with one another. Their mutual hatred prevents them from comprehending that they represent opposite sides of the same tarnished coin. Symbolically, they are the film's true "twins of evil."

The narrative's literal twins, virginal Maria and corruptible Frieda, simply become the pawns of the two feuding malefactors. Their foibles are instrumental in propelling the events of the screenplay. The film climaxes as Weil's mob of insurgent townspeople storms the castle of Karnstein. Both of the community "pillars" are brutally killed, along with the contaminated Frieda.

Appropriately, *TWINS OF EVIL* emblazons Peter Cushing's name before the title. The actor projects a ghastly sincerity in the role of the self-appointed vigilante leader. His character truly believes that his crusade to purge evil from the village is a holy calling. But he obviously relishes these enterprises as well, taking every opportunity to leave his aging wife behind and ride with "the Brotherhood."

Still, Cushing allows his characterization to display halting stages of growth. Confronted with the knowledge that he has very nearly sacrificed the innocent Maria by mistake, he is finally moved to express misgivings about unchallenged vigilantism.

His assault on the castle would seem to be a heroic gesture, but Cushing never lets us forget that Weil is primarily capitalizing on the proof that vampirism has infected Karnstein and the resurrected Mircalla. For him it's simply another holy crusade, one which allows him to justifiably attack his despised rival.

*TWINS OF EVIL* is generally recalled for the participation of the Collinson sisters. They had previously achieved notoriety as *Playboy's* first pair of twin centerfolds. However, the film's real strength emanates from Cushing's pious procession of sacrifices, mirrored by his alter ego's libidinous employment of females as objects. Damien Thomas' foppish depravity is an ironic match for Cushing's stoic dogmatism.

Sans extras, *TWINS OF EVIL* has been afforded an attractive spotlighting by the laserdisc medium. The color hues are strong throughout, except for some "noisy" shades of black during the pre-credits prologue. The 1:33-1 academy aspect ratio presents the cinematography with no significant loss of imagery.

The film's climactic sequences do indicate some inconsistency. The more horrific gore inserts contain thin vertical white lines, as though they've been "Frankensteined" from a separate print source. These streaks are faint, however, and don't detract from the visceral impact of viewing the unexpurgated conclusion.

Hazy recollections of sexually explicit magazine photographs featuring the sisters Collinson may inhibit one from believing this to be the legitimately uncut *TWINS OF EVIL*. In fact, however, the laserdisc does appear to represent the British edition as it was released to cinemas.

—John F. Black

**THE CRUCIBLE**

Fox Home Video

Sides One and Two CLV, Side Three CAV  
\$49.95

Having survived nearly 45 years on the stage, Arthur Miller's powerful tale of the Salem Witch Trials in 1692—paralleling the McCarthy HUAAC Hearings of the "fabulous" fifties—comes to cinematic life courtesy of Miller and director Nicholas Hytner.

A voodoo ritual involving a Haitian servant and some young girls is discovered by Reverend Parris (Bruce Davison), the Salem minister. Seeking to protect themselves, the girls cry witchery on the servant, Tituba. Tituba, in turn, cries witchery on a fellow townsman's wife to protect herself. And so, the witch hunt begins. Cries of "Witchery!" become so prominent in Salem that John Hale (Rob Campbell), a minister with vast occult knowledge, is summoned for help. When his efforts ultimately fail, Deputy Governor Danforth (Paul Scofield) arrives to set up the inquisition that executes scores of innocent people for supposedly practicing witchcraft.

John Proctor (Daniel Day-Lewis), a local farmer, is the ultimate desire of Abigail Williams (Winona Ryder), the niece of Reverend Parris and instigator of the whole witch hunt. While employed as a servant, Abigail had a brief affair with Proctor. Her subsequent dismissal by Proctor's wife, Elizabeth (Joan Allen), prompts Abigail to exact revenge any way she can, regardless of who else may suffer. Ultimately, Proctor faces the choice of confessing a lie to save himself from execution, or to die an honest man with his soul and name intact.

Arthur Miller is to be commended for the seemingly impossible task of cutting his three-hour-plus stage version down to a more palatable 123 minutes for the screen. Nicholas Hytner, who last directed the superb *THE MADNESS OF KING GEORGE*, again proves his aptitude for bringing historical material to the screen in an unpretentious manner. His pacing and rhythm keep the action flowing freely, the transitions becoming opaque and seamless.

Ryder is a powerful presence, making Abigail simultaneously vicious and human. This interpretation is ignored by most actresses who see her as nothing more than a Puritanical Medea. Daniel Day-Lewis is adequate, if apathetic, as Proctor. Rob Campbell is sadly ineffectual as Reverend Hale. The tragic weight of the minister torn between his duty to God and his realization that the witch trials are a sideshow is totally lost on him. Paul Scofield is the crown jewel here. His Danforth is cold, silently menacing, and shockingly sympathetic to a degree, another quality usually ignored by actors and directors alike.

The double laserdisc is letterboxed at 1.85:1, beautifully emphasizing both the period sets of Lilly Kilvert and Andrew

© 1972 Universal Pictures



Dunn's stunning cinematography. The film is presented on two CLV sides and one CAV side. As only two film chapters are featured on side three, the CAV format seems ultimately useless here. Twenty chapter stops are utilized and the side breaks are thoughtful. The THX remastered image looks flawless, nicely capturing the rich autumn colors utilized in the sets and costumes. The haunting hammered dulcimer strains of George Fenton's excellent musical score are pleasantly accentuated on the Dolby Digital soundtrack.

Brooke Perry

#### THE INVISIBLE BOY

MGM/UA

Both sides CLV

\$39.98

Beaver Cleaver Meets Robby the Robot! *THE INVISIBLE BOY* is one of the few MGM contributions to fifties sci-fi and, as might be expected from the studio that brought you *Lassie*, it's squeaky clean entertainment all the way.



Robby, Dr. Morbrius' mechanical manservant who was last seen traversing the cream colored terrain of the planet Altair 4, seemed to warrant at least one more screen appearance before being demoted to an occasional television prop. *FORBIDDEN PLANET* producer (Nicholas Nayfack) and writer (Cyril Hume) contrived this blandly wholesome but serviceable kiddie feature, reactivating the robot in the comfortably middle-class setting of a fifties sitcom with a budget puny enough to match one.

Richard Eyer is a slightly morose but otherwise typical American kid who's misunderstood by Mom (Diane Brewster), while his computer-expert dad (Philip Abbott) puts him to sleep at the dinner table with deadening scientific dissertations. The boy finds a soulmate in the form of the dulcet-voiced robot found among the effects of a crackpot inventor. In his best clipped English butler manner, Robby obliges the boy with anything his young imagination can muster. Eyer promptly goes airborne, buzzing over the neighborhood on a one-passenger futuristic kite. Soon after, he gives invisibility a try, courtesy of the robot's home-brew. (Despite the

H.G. Wells-inspired title, Eyer's invisibility is just one turn in a busy plot.)

The structure of *THE INVISIBLE BOY* is so clumsy that it seems to have been constructed from halves of two entirely different scripts. After several reels of soft-centered, sub-Disney "boy and his dog" hijinks, the film finally gets down to its central conflict, usurping major plot points from *INVADERS FROM MARS* in the process. However, instead of a Martian in a fishbowl, the menace of *THE INVISIBLE BOY* takes the form of "Supercomputer," a clunky, room-sized contraption complete with strobe lights and banks of instrument panels, topped with a glass-domed, instrument filled housing, not unlike Robby's familiar, thimble-shaped headpiece. Using the now reprogrammed Robby as its henchman, the computer attempts world conquest, recruiting key scientists and military personnel by implanting electrode-like control mechanisms in their necks.

As is usual for a film with more plot than running time, just about every thing gets short shrift. Unexpectedly, this includes Eyer who, instead of becoming the hero of the piece, drops from sight during most of the climactic action, attaining a form of invisibility not intended by the title. But the film's biggest misstep is in turning the demure Robby into a figure of menace. Truly a character without a dark side, the cuddly robot is as scary as Minnie Mouse, even when threatening to carry out Supercomputer's demand that he gore out the eyes of his young master.

No complaints about disc quality, however. MGM/UA may not have provided any extras, but is to be congratulated for a pristine transfer with outstanding picture and sound. Anyone seeking a companion piece to *FORBIDDEN PLANET* need look no further.

—Michael Brunas

#### GARGOYLES

The Roan Group

Two Sides CLV

\$49.95

Rarely has seventies television created memorable horror. *GARGOYLES* proves the exception (along with, of course, friend *Kolchak*). We learn in the film's voiceover prologue that gargoyles were actually "the devil" and his troops, destined to be reborn every 600 years in an attempt to dominate the earth. Mercer Boley (Cornel Wilde), a university professor specializing in the study of myths, and daughter Diana (Jennifer Salt) are lured to Uncle Willie's Desert Museum on Willie's promise to reveal rare American Indian rituals. Willie's



Desert Museum turns out to be a tourist trap on an abandoned highway, filled with the usual desert junk. The real treasure, a fully assembled gargoyle skeleton, is in a nearby shack. Boley scoffs at the skeleton but agrees to Willie's terms to share coauthorship of a book in trade for Willie's knowledge of rituals. During Willie's recitations, the shack is attacked by gargoyles. Mercer and Diana escape, carrying with them the gargoyle skull, but Willie is killed. The pair rent a room in a motel run by the on-the-make Mrs. Parks (played to puxilated perfection by *DARK SHADOWS*' Grayson Hall). In the morning, Mercer and Diana report Willie's death to the sheriff (William Stevens). Driving out to the museum, they encounter a group of dirt-bikers led by James Reeger (Scott Glenn). In Hollywood horror tradition, the youths are accused of Willie's death and arrested. That night the gargoyles break into the Boley's motel room and steal the skull in an attempt to conceal any proof of their existence. The English-speaking head gargoyle (Bernie Casey), quite taken with the alluring Diana, brings her back to his cavern lair. Listening with more than an intellectual interest, he makes her read aloud from an old transcript describing an incubus' seduction of a human woman.

It's great to see Carlsbad Caverns, home to such films as *KING SOL OMON'S MINES* (1950) and *EARTH VS THE SPIDER* (1958), used as the gargoyles' home base. Stan Winston's and Ellis Burman's Emmy-winning gargoyle makeup is striking and realistic, providing a good range of convincing facial expression, especially in the close-ups of the head gargoyle discoursing with Diana. Bernie Casey, Cornel Wilde and Woody Chambliss are all right at home, with Chambliss giving a particularly engaging performance.

*GARGOYLES* is beautifully transferred to laserdisc. A generous 18 chapter stops aid in navigating *GARGOYLES*' 74 minutes. No extras are included—just the film—but the film itself provides sufficient justification to own the disc.

Michael Spampinato

Continued on page 72





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**Keep Young and Beautiful**

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# GILDIRIA STUART

**interviewed by  
Rick Atkins  
Kevin C. Shinnick  
and Richard Valley**

**I**n our youth-obsessed culture, it's reassuring to know that it's never too late to have your dreams come true. Witness Gloria Stuart, who, at age 87, says of her role of old Rose in *TITANIC*: "I've waited my whole life for this!"

It's been a long time coming, but you wouldn't know it to look at the lovely Gloria, who had to endure hours of special makeup sessions to make her appear old enough to play the role that garnered her Academy Award and Golden Globe nominations and a Screen Actors Guild award as Best Supporting Actress.

The average movie fan of 1998 is, of course, just learning about Gloria Stuart, but horror fans needed no introduction, not to the glamorous blonde star of *THE OLD DARK HOUSE* (1932) and *THE INVISIBLE MAN* (1933). Naturally, *Scarlet Street* was ready with interviews conducted by Kevin G. Shinnick and Rick Atkins, and a recent *TITANIC* update from publisher/editor Richard Valley . . .





The lovely Gloria Stuart remains seated (the better to look shorter than her costar?) while the bandaged Claude Rains plots to grip the world in his transparent hand in *THE INVISIBLE MAN* (1933), one of three films the actress made for legendary director James Whale.

*Scarlet Street:* You look so much younger than your actual age. How much time did it take to make you up to look like a woman in her hundreds?

**Gloria Stuart:** About an hour and a half, and then, of course, the hair had to be done. Then it was an hour after everybody else went home to take the makeup off! You can only take latex off with water. I had two people—one on each side—with sponges, sponging me off for an hour every night! (Laughs)

**SS:** How have you been enjoying the attention that's come your way due to *TITANIC*?

**GS:** It's just so exciting! It's just unbelievable! I knew that it was going to be a wonderful picture, but this fabulous, wonderful success—well, I don't think even James Cameron dreamed about it. I've seen it four times, now, and I think it ranks with *GONE WITH THE WIND* for exactly the same reason: it's a great love story. Leonardo and Kate are beautiful lovers. I know that all the people I've spoken to are very touched by the love story, and for Jim to have used it against this terrible, unnecessary disaster is just pure genius.

**SS:** Then there's the fact that you received an Academy Award nomination for Best Supporting Actress.

**GS:** I was on TV being interviewed by Regis Philbin and Kathie Lee Gifford,

and I said, "I've been thinking the nomination is the frosting on the cake, but it's not just the frosting—it's the candles and everything else!" (Laughs) After all the years I've spent in the business, it's unbelievable and absolutely wonderful.

**SS:** How did you get the role of *Old Rose*?

**GS:** Well, I didn't have an agent or anything. My agent had taken off to South America about seven years ago. I was working in my studio—I'm an artist—and I never bother to answer the telephone during the day. After I was finished, I checked my phone messages and there was one from Lightstorm Entertainment. I'd never heard of them! It said *TITANIC* and it mentioned location work. Well, that interested me a lot, I like to travel. Then it said the location was in Poland, and I thought, "Poland? Why can't they go to Italy or France?" (Laughs) Anyway, I called a wonderful friend, Marvin Page, who was the casting director on *GENERAL HOSPITAL* for many years, and I said, "Marvin, please help me with this." Well, he told me Lightstorm was very important and that it was James Cameron who wanted to see me and that he was the hottest director in town. So the casting director came to see me. I talked to her for about an hour while they recorded me on tape. Then about half an hour after they left,

they called back and asked if they could send over the script. So they sent over this enormous script!

**SS:** And what did you think of it?

**GS:** Well, you know actors and actresses. When we get a script, we don't read anyone's part but our own. So I went through it, reading "Old Rose" and "Old Rose" and I knew it was going to be wonderful. I could taste it, the part was so wonderful. I knew it was what I had been waiting for all my life.

**SS:** Did you get the part solely on the basis of the tape or did you have to audition for James Cameron?

**GS:** Oh, no, I read for James. They called and asked me if I would read and naturally I agreed right away. And then they asked me if I would mind, if I would be able to age to over a hundred years, and I said, "Easy! Just see me in the morning" (Laughs) Well, they asked me to read without makeup. I started to say, "For this part, I'll read for him without clothes on"—my late husband used to write for Groucho Marx—but I thought better of it. Well, James came over the next day and I wore no makeup and had a little white cap covering my hair, and I read for him.

**SS:** Obviously, it went well.

**GS:** He only stopped me once. It was during *Old Rose's* speech about the life



boats and how they didn't go back to look for survivors, for the fifteen hundred people in the water. He said you sound very angry and I said, "Well, isn't that the way you wrote it?" He said, "No, I hadn't thought of it that way." But for me the immorality of it was so shocking, and I was furious. I asked him if he wanted me to read it more gently, but he told me no; he told me to read it the way I thought best.

SS: And that's what got you the part?

GS: Well, the next day I left for England to visit friends. In London, I called *The Hollywood Reporter*. I called *Variety*. I called my friends for three weeks, trying to find out if the cast had been announced. Finally I couldn't take it any longer and came home and wrote James a letter. I wrote, "Dear Mr. Cameron, I would like to read the script for you again. Having read *Young Rose*, I think I should have given you a feistier reading." I sent the letter priority mail, on Friday, and on Tuesday morning they called and said, "Would you like to play Old Rose?"

SS: There was so much footage shot for *TITANIC*. How much of your performance wound up on the cutting-room floor?

GS: Oh, fifty percent. But it doesn't bother me, because those scenes were voiceovers or scenes with the rest of the cast. Everybody had to be cut; it wasn't just Old Rose. And Jim is putting together all the cuts and we're going to have a laserdisc release running five and a half hours. That will be wonderful!

SS: You and Kate Winslet portray the same character in *TITANIC*. Did you meet beforehand to discuss how to play the role?

GS: Oh, yes! I wanted to meet her when she came to California, and Kate wanted to meet me. I also wanted to see her test, because in building a character body language is so terribly important. I wanted to see how she moved, how she phrased her sentences and so forth. Now, she's not playing me; I'm playing her. Well, they arranged for her to come to my house for tea. I told my daughter, and she told me to go over to the English bakery and get crumpets and everything. So I had this wonderful tea all spread out. We met at my house and it was instant affection and identification. I said, "I have a wonderful tea for you, Kate," and she said, "Couldn't I have a drink?" So we killed a bottle of champagne instead. We had an hour together over a bottle of champagne. It was a very happy hour. (Laughs) And then they took me down to Mexico to watch Kate and Leonardo work, so we had another weekend together. No, no... we're good friends and very sympathetic.

SS: How did working with James Cameron compare with working with such legendary directors as James Whale and John Ford?

GS: Well, he's exactly the kind of director James Whale was, he's a hands-on director. He's into the wardrobe, the

makeup, the hair, the props, every thing—and so was James Whale. John Ford, not John had been a silent film action director, and he was wonderful, and I loved working with him—and also George Stevens—but James Whale and James Cameron are very much alike.

SS: How did James Cameron help you in your characterization?

GS: Well, James told me to use my own voice. He did not want me to talk like a quavering little old lady. James said "Gloria, I want your voice." And he told the makeup people not to touch me eyes. He used a word I'd never heard before—he said they were going to "morph" them. I didn't know what that meant! (Laughs) What they did was to morph from Kate's eyes to my eyes, in a transition scene. It was quite fascinating.

SS: Were there any special difficulties during the filming?

GS: They wanted me to ride on a helicopter and land on that little deck on the

in Oregon. My mother's people were Dutch and Welsh. Her mother's side came from the South and I understand my great grandmother's people fought for the North during the Civil War. I do know one son fought for the North and one fought for the South, so it was probably a border state. And then my mother's father was a Dutchman and he came from New York state. So it's Dutch, Welsh, and Scotch.

SS: How did you get started in acting?

GS: Well, I had played in the theater from the time I was 14, in the Santa Monica Theatre Guild. Then when I went to Berkeley, I played on campus and off campus at the Berkeley Playhouse. When I married my first husband, Blair Newell, and went to Carmel, I played in the theater at the Golden Bough. A director from the Pasadena Playhouse saw me and asked me to come down and play in *THE SEAGULL* at Pasadena. My husband was a sculptor and I was an unemployed actress, and in those days

the goal of most serious actors and actresses was the New York theater. Movies were not considered very classy. I was very lofty about film, but we were broke. I had worked on the *Santa Monica Outlook* as a reporter. The editor/publisher, Robert Holliday, was a very good friend of Randolph Hearst and also my parents. He'd always said, "Gloria, why don't you go into movies?" I said, "Movies aren't for me. I'm a stage actress." But we were broke, so I called my mother and said, "Please tell Bob Holliday that I'm going to Pasadena to appear in a Chekhov play and I'd like to make contact with someone in motion pictures." Bob called someone at Paramount Studios and they sent a casting director over on opening night. The man I played opposite had an agent who sent someone from Universal, so the next morning I was offered a contract from both Paramount and Universal. People say, "How do you get into movies? It's so hard!" It was just nothing; they fought over it, flipped a coin, and Universal won. In those days, you did exactly what the studios said. Today I'd have said, "No, I want to go to Paramount." But there was also the fact that Universal had offered me \$250 a week, which in those days was a fortune. Paramount offered \$150 and my agent said I should take the Universal offer.

SS: So the money was a deciding factor?

GS: Well, you know, if you're hungry for money and broke and you don't know anything...

SS: That's true.

GS: It's too bad, because I would have had, I think, a much different career at Paramount. They had Lubitsch, they had Chevalier, they had Dietrich. They had so many wonderful stars. A wonderful studio. Universal was a B studio in every department.



Dick Powell croons a tune to Gloria Stuart in *GOLD DIGGERS OF 1935*, a typical Busby Berkeley extravaganza from Warner Bros.

boat, which was about the size of a post age stamp, and I wouldn't do it. I said, "James, I'm sorry but I do not believe in the theory of the helicopter. Some day they're going to discover that they simply don't work!" (Laughs) So they had to get around that.

SS: Let's backtrack a little, shall we? As a teenager, you used the surname "Finch."

GS: Oh, my mother married a second time and he was my stepfather. Mama thought I should use his name. I was never adopted, but I used his name all through junior high school and high school and college. When I got into acting, I went back to "Stuart."

SS: Tell us about your family.

GS: Well, my father was Scotch and his people came from Oregon; he was born

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# TITANIC AND SOMEWHERE IN TIME

## TITANIC and Somewhere in Time

by Jeff Thompson

with Richard, and by traveling to nearby Milfield College to see Richard (before he becomes aware of her or their love).

Each woman's history with her lover is symbolized by an object—Elise has the pocket watch that she gives back to Richard in 1972 because he had left it with her in 1912 only because she had given it to him in 1972 (a fascinating but inexplicable paradox), and Rose has the Heart of the Ocean, the spectacular diamond necklace that her fiancé Cal (Billy Zane) had given her. The latter treasure becomes disassociated with Cal and associated with Rose's beloved Jack Dawson (Leonardo DiCaprio) when Rose (Kate Winslet) wears the necklace—and nothing else—to pose for Jack, an itinerant sketch artist. Rose calls the moment "the most erotic experience of my life—up to that point."

Indeed, a woman's portrait, striking and memorable, figures in both films. Jack's revealing sketch of Rose is sal

**A**s the film begins, an old woman clings to the memories of her brief but perfect love affair in 1912 and to a valuable, tangible memento of the interlude. The movie then relates the story of her long-ago romance and reveals the affair's abrupt, traumatic termination. Is this beloved motion picture *TITANIC* (1997)? No, it is *SOMEWHERE IN TIME* (1980).

Actually, both movies fit the description, for there are quite a few remarkable parallels between the two. One of the most important is the deeply passionate emotions that both films stir within female and male viewers alike. This romantic connection between movie and moviegoer has resulted in *SOMEWHERE IN TIME*, a box-office disappointment in 1980 becoming a popular feature on cable TV channels and a steady seller in video stores, and has catapulted the high-profile, \$200 million epic *TITANIC* above *JURASSIC PARK* and *STAR WARS* to become the most successful motion picture of all time.

Based on Richard Matheson's 1975 novel *Bid Time Return*, the \$5 million *SOMEWHERE IN TIME* (screenplay by Matheson) tells the story of playwright Richard Collier (Christopher Reeve), who wills himself back in time 68 years to 1912 in order to meet Elise McKenna (Jane Seymour), the enigmatic actress with whose picture he has fallen in love, and who, as an 85-year-old woman (Susan French), has sought Richard out and cryptically urged him, "Come back to me." *TITANIC* (screenplay by director James Cameron) begins with 100-year-old Rose DeWitt Bukater (*Scarlet Street* interviewee Gloria Stuart), who mentally and verbally relives the events of 1912 as she relates them to a group of scientists exploring the Titanic shipwreck. In each film, the woman, in the twilight of a long life, is trying to reconnect with her long-lost love—Rose by returning to the scene of the shipwreck, and Elise both by remaining at the Grand Hotel, the site of her brief but exquisite time







**LEFT:** Elise McKenna and Richard Collier (Jane Seymour and Christopher Reeve) spend a magical afternoon in 1912, even though Richard hails from *SOMEWHERE IN TIME* other than that year. **RIGHT:** Meanwhile, in another part of 1912, Rose DeWitt Bukater and Jack Dawson (Kate Winslet and Leonardo DiCaprio) fall in love on board a ship of dreams called *TITANIC*.

vaged by the scientific explorers, and Richard falls in love with Elise by means of a gorgeous photograph of her in the Grand Hotel's Hall of History. One of the most glorious touches in *SOMEWHERE IN TIME* is that the picture inspiring Richard to fall in love with Elise in 1980 was taken in 1912 while Elise was gazing at Richard. Elements, such as the stories behind the portrait, the pocket watch, and the penny in *SOMEWHERE IN TIME* and, in *TITANIC*, the morphing effects between the great ship in ruins and the vessel brand-new, and between young Rose and old Rose, give these two films their romanticism, nostalgia, and great power to move audiences all over the world.

Another great asset that *SOMEWHERE IN TIME* and *TITANIC* have in common is their magnificent music, which sets the romantic, dramatic moods so wondrously. John Barry's lush, passionate *SOMEWHERE IN TIME* themes, with a bit of Rachmaninoff alongside Barry's own compositions, has been a steady best-seller on LP, cassette, and two different CD pressings (Jane Seymour listened to her friend John Barry's score in the delivery room while she gave birth to her twins, one of whom she named for another dear friend—Christopher Reeve). James Horner's award winning *TITANIC* score, with its dashes of Irish folk music and New Age sounds amidst a traditional symphonic setting, already has become the number-one best-

selling soundtrack of all time. It is impossible to imagine either film without its lovely background music.

In both *SOMEWHERE IN TIME* and *TITANIC*, the lovers are from different worlds. Rose comes from the privileged high society of the first class passengers aboard the Titanic, while Jack travels with immigrants and common folks in third class. Elise and Richard literally come from two different worlds—Elise from the charming, genteel world of 1912 and Richard from the harsher present time, to which he ultimately must return. It is ardent love that brings both couples together, but, in each movie, the woman has a stern guardian figure who disapproves of her new love and tries to keep the couple apart. Elise's manager, William Fawcett Robinson (Christopher Plummer), fears Richard's influence on Elise and hires men to abduct his rival. Rose's mother (Frances Fisher), along with Rose's fiancé Calhoun, disapproves of Rose's attraction to Jack Dawson. She forbids her daughter to see Jack. Cal and his vicious manservant (David Warner) go so far as to frame Jack for the "theft" of the diamond necklace.

No tactic, however, can keep Richard and Elise or Jack and Rose away from each other for long, and the lovers reunite briefly before tragedy strikes. Each of the two young

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When the unsinkable *TITANIC* begins its long descent to the ocean floor, audiences are treated to one of the most spectacular displays of special effects ever committed to film. Miraculously, the technical display never overpowers the love story at the heart of the film.



## TIMELESS LOVE

*Continued from page 30*

men dies young, while each woman lives "a long life" and dies "warm in her bed," in the prophetic last words of Jack Dawson. Each woman lives on with her memories of love locked in "the deepest and most secret reaches of her heart," in Elise's words. Rose echoes, "A woman's heart is a deep ocean of memories."

The parallels between *SOMEWHERE IN TIME* and *TITANIC* continue. During her fleeting time with her beloved, each woman "performs" for him—Elise on stage as an actress and Rose in private as Jack's nude model. Both couples make love only once before they are separated. After breaking his kidnappers' bonds, Richard finds Elise again, and the two go back to Elise's room in the Grand Hotel to consummate their deep adoration for each other. Fleeing from their pursuers, Jack and Rose descend to the ship's womblike hold. They come together in the back seat of an automobile that was loaded onto the ocean liner before it departed on its fateful maiden voyage. (The car, if not the consummation, is historically accurate.) Just as the sinking of the *TITANIC* has come to represent the death of the more elegant 19th century world, Rose and Jack's love-making in a car symbolically gives birth to the earthier 20th-century world, in which automobiles have been used for "driving" in more than one sense of the word.

In the most striking parallels between *SOMEWHERE IN TIME* and *TITANIC*, the lovers' romance is cut short by unexpected, traumatic events, though the couples are reunited in the afterlife. Both men "vanish" before the women's eyes—Richard quite literally disappears when the 1979 penny yanks him out of Elise's time, and Jack, dead from hypothermia, floats away into the murky blackness of the North Atlantic. Jack is now dead, Richard soon dies of a broken heart back in 1980, but Rose and Elise live on for decades without their men. Nevertheless, when Richard expires in 1980 and Rose passes away in 1996, something miraculous occurs. Richard finds himself floating above his body and out toward a white, shining void where Elise McKenna, young again, awaits him with outstretched hand. Rose gently drifts out of her body and finds her way back to the ruined corridors of the *Titanic*. Suddenly, the ship and its passengers are alive again. The spirits of the lost voyagers happily welcome Rose as she, young again, ascends the ship's grand staircase to the waiting arms of the dashing Jack Dawson. This breathtaking finale is not completely original to either film. *WUTHERING HEIGHTS* (1939), *THE GHOST AND MRS. MUIR* (1947), and other movies and stories have used similar devices—but *SOMEWHERE IN TIME* and *TITANIC* are



Though he isn't nearly as villainous as *TITANIC*'s slimy Cal Hockley (Billy Zane), William Fawcett Robinson (Christopher Plummer) nevertheless manages to come between the lovers of *SOMEWHERE IN TIME*.

perhaps the two most effective, memorable examples of this sentimental, uplifting climax.

With so much going for them, the films have inspired a deep devotion among their fans. *TITANIC*, both movie and ship, has several Internet websites, and, since 1990, *SOMEWHERE IN TIME* fans have been organized under the banner of the International Network of Somewhere in Time Enthusiasts (INSITE). The Network publishes an excellent fanzine and holds annual weekend gatherings (attended by Richard Matheson, director Jeannot Szwarc, and other celebrities) at the Grand Hotel on Mackinac Island, Michigan. (Perhaps, now that *TITANIC* has proven once again that audiences respond fervently to nostalgia and romance, the similarly themed *SOMEWHERE IN TIME* could be rereleased theatrically and find an even larger audience.)

Although *SOMEWHERE IN TIME* and *TITANIC* share many common themes and effects—both films successfully use beautiful costumes, ornate settings, romantic music, and human drama to recreate the fragile world that existed just after the turn of the century—each is an individual, unique work of art that demands attention and admiration. *SOMEWHERE IN TIME* tells an extremely personal story. *TITANIC*, on the other hand, turns a staggering historical event into something extremely personal, while retaining the event's authenticity. Both stories profoundly move viewers and hold unique places in film history. People come back to them time after time.



## GLORIA STUART

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SS: Did you find the transition from stage to film difficult?

GS: Not at all. Talkies had not been in too long, so they were looking for stage-trained actors and actresses. No, not at all.

SS: So your first film was

GS: Universal loaned me to Warners for *STREET OF WOMEN* with Kay Francis. She was what we called in those days "a clothes horse." I was the ingenue. Then came *THE OLD DARK HOUSE* in '32. Then I made a lot of pictures. In the first or second year, I made nine pictures! I was running from set to set.

SS: A fan magazine referred to you as the "bright light of Universal."

GS: Well, actually, they didn't have any male stars. They didn't have any female stars. They hired people on a one picture deal. Irene Dunne played there on

a one-picture thing, Claudette Colbert on a one picture thing . . . but they didn't have top people under contract. They hired top people. I was a stock player. I was a leading lady. I never played anything but leading ladies. There was no star development at Universal like there was at Metro or Paramount or even RKO, where they worked very carefully to bring you along. Voice lessons, speech lessons, everything.

SS: Universal was on a lower rung than the other studios.

GS: It was a B studio, like Columbia. I was loaned to RKO several times, Paramount several times, Warner Bros. several times, where I made good pictures . . . but not at my home studio.

SS: Did you sign your contract in the presence of Carl Laemmle, Jr.? How were studio contracts signed back then?

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LEFT: Gloria Stuart's leading man in *THE INVISIBLE MAN* may not have been crazy, but there is no denying that he wasn't all there. An enterprising artist fills in the missing Claude Rains. RIGHT: Gloria plays a touching farewell scene with a pile of bedclothes.

#### GLORIA STUART

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GS: I don't think it was Junior Laemmle who was there. It was the studio manager, and he just handed me the contract. And my agent was there. And so I just signed it.

SS: What kind of studio boss was Junior Laemmle?

GS: All I know is, any ideas that Junior came up with, I didn't like. (Laughs)

SS: How did you get cast in *THE OLD DARK HOUSE*?

GS: James Whale asked for me. He had directed *JOURNEY'S END* in England and New York City. He was a very prestigious director. He'd seen my tests, a scene I did from Chekhov's *THE SEA-GULL*. When he saw it, he asked for me. James Whale was very special. He was a genius and a very sweet man. He had a caustic wit. He could cut you off at the pass very easily, but he didn't use it very often. He was wonderful; I adored him. He would take me to the theater with him occasionally. James was a very charming man.

SS: And his films are wonderful.

GS: James was enormously talented in every direction. The sets for *THE OLD DARK HOUSE* were exactly what James Whale wanted. He knew period furniture, he knew color, he knew the ambience of the set, and he was very specific with the actors about what he wanted. Most movie directors didn't give you much help, but James was very specific about how he felt about the scene and how he wanted you to feel about the scene. He was very helpful and very fine in his judgment. He was very exact about how Charles Laughton was presented and how Eva Moore and I were presented. Very detailed.

SS: The opening storm, before you get to the house, is very impressive.

GS: It should have been! (Laughs) They had wind and rain machines, and it was really very, very cold. We shot all night and we were all just soaking wet. Raymond Massey and Melvyn Douglas

complained the entire night, but it was my first location shoot and, to tell you the truth, I thought it was lots of fun!

SS: You were one of the few Americans on the set.

GS: Yes, Melvyn Douglas and I were the only Americans. Raymond Massey was Canadian and it was one of his first pictures in this country. Laughton was English and it was one of his first films, and so forth . . .

SS: And, of course, Boris Karloff was an Englishman.

GS: Oh, Boris was dear. Very soft spoken. Very laid back. He was a beautiful actor, and very private. He was the most charming, the most considerate actor you could possibly imagine, the complete antithesis of the kind of characters he played in his movies. But with that makeup . . . when he made his entrance in *THE OLD DARK HOUSE*, it was very easy for me to act frightened because I was frightened! (Laughs)

SS: Charles Laughton was known for being quite difficult at times.

GS: He was very involved in his characterization. I don't think there was very much conversation. On most movie sets you would have a lot of talk about what you'd just done, what you were going to do next . . . but there was very little conversation on a James Whale set. Very little small talk. Well, maybe among the English, who stopped every day at eleven and four for tea.

SS: Still, there was a marvelous chemistry between all the performers.

GS: Oh, yes, I think we were all very supportive of each other. Somebody asked me at a seminar once, "How did you feel Miss Stuart, making a classic film?" Well, we were just making movies. We were acting for money.

SS: Here's a review from *The New York Times* for *THE OLD DARK HOUSE*.

GS: How wonderful! (Reads.) "Gloria Stuart is both clever and charming. But her evening gown for such a scene is perhaps a trifle out of place. Be that as it may, it is a stunning creation."

SS: Now, about that dress.

GS: (Laughs) James wanted me to wear something that would in effect show what he referred later to as, "a streak of white light" because I had to run down this long, dark corridor to escape the evil Karloff, who was chasing me around.

SS: What do you think of your own performance in this now-classic movie?

GS: That's just the thing. Had we known that these movies would be the classics they now are, we could have done them even better. They were considered just another job to us. But, Karloff . . . he was the great one!

SS: What about Claude Rains? You starred with him in his very first motion picture, 1933's *THE INVISIBLE MAN*.

GS: There was an old adage in Hollywood back in those days: "an actor's actor." Well, Claude was an actor's actor! (Laughs) That means an enormous ego, enormous! Deep concentration all unto himself and death to the rest of the cast. He was a great stage actor, but he had a problem taking screen direction and would back many of his leading ladies into the scenery. He did that with me on several occasions during the filming of *THE INVISIBLE MAN*. That was rather amusing. I'd simply yell, "James!" and he'd say, "Now, Claude, be nice to Gloria; this is not the stage. Now, do it again."

SS: Wasn't Claude Rains rather short to be backing you into a corner?

GS: Yes, I worked in a trench. (Laughs)

SS: Aside from having to rescue you repeatedly, did James Whale get on well with Claude Rains?

GS: Oh, well, the word I use is persnickety. James was very persnickety about Claude's performance. They didn't always agree, but Claude did it James' way. Claude was playing a part that was originally going to be played by Boris Karloff, so perhaps he thought it best not to be too grand.

SS: Rains sounds a bit like Lionel Atwill, who you starred with in *THE SECRET OF THE BLUE ROOM*, also in 1933.



**LEFT:** If Charles Laughton and Gloria Stuart were any more cowed by Eva Moore in *THE OLD DARK HOUSE* (1932), they'd give milk! **RIGHT:** Eddie Cantor was "very much the star" on the set of *ROMAN SCANDALS* (1933), Gloria recalls, but she still enjoyed making the film.

**GS:** He was also what we call an "actor's actor." He was very grand. He had been a great Broadway matinee idol, and he was very much of himself. But he was interesting, and beautifully educated, and for that it was a pleasure working with him.

**SS:** James Whale actually didn't want Boris Karloff for *THE INVISIBLE MAN*.

**GS:** Well, they were not the greatest of friends. I wasn't aware of it when we made *THE OLD DARK HOUSE*. The rest of the cast wasn't aware of it. It was not apparent during the filming, and I was present on the set every day.

**SS:** We really must ask you about working with Ernest Thesiger in *THE OLD DARK HOUSE*.

**GS:** Oh, dear . . . another "actor's actor!" (Laughs) He never let down his actor's persona. He had great technique, just like Claude Rains and Lionel Atwill, and he was a particular favorite of James Whale. They loved to create bits of business together, like the scene where Ernest sniffs the gin or where he throws the flowers being arranged by his sister into the fire. All of that came from James and Ernest; it was not in the original novel by J.B. Priestley.

**SS:** You have a memorable scene with Eva Moore, who plays Rebecca Fern.

**GS:** Yes! When you see her in *THE OLD DARK HOUSE*, it's impossible to believe that she was one of the great beauties of the Victorian stage. She was also one of the leading suffragettes of the period. The scene was very interesting, because James had me change into that famous dress so I could be a "streak of white light." (Laughs) Really, though, there was no legitimate reason for me to put on that dress. Certainly nobody else had to change their clothes!

**SS:** During the filming of *THE OLD DARK HOUSE*, you were also involved in forming the Screen Actors Guild.

**GS:** Well, there was a lot of talk about an actors union. There was no writer's union, no directors union, no unions except the ones that were for the gimps,

sound men, electricians, so forth and so on. Because there were so many refugees from the Actors Equity strike in New York, which had been murderous, there was a lot of talk on sets that we should have something like actor's equity here in Hollywood.

**SS:** The strike in New York?

**GS:** That was probably around '29 or '30. They lost the theaters and put actors out on the street. Equity was already in existence, you see. Equity survivors were in Hollywood and talking to motion picture actors about forming a union. Paul Lukas was one of them. Melvyn Douglas was very interested in that and talked to me about it. I imagine it was around 1936 that SAG was finally organized. I was on the board of directors in 1938, with Ralph Morgan, Joan Crawford, Paul Lukas, and I think Cagney. So I was one of the founders. There are very few of us left breathing! (Laughs)

**SS:** Was there much resentment by the studios over your trying to form a union?

**GS:** Oh, yes! Oh, yes—and at the same time the writers were working to form a union, and the directors. Oh, yes, there was a lot of opposition. However, we overcame.

**SS:** What was the basic impetus for starting the union?

**GS:** Well, it was working hours. For example, I would get to the studio at six in the morning and sometimes we'd work straight through until midnight. Some times we'd work all Saturday night and were back on the set Monday morning. I remember on *THE KISS BEFORE THE MIRROR* [1933], about halfway through the picture, Paul Lukas said to me, "I'm going to quit at six o'clock." And I said, "You're what? You can't do that unless James says so!" He said, "I am leaving the set at six o'clock." Well, it was such a revolutionary idea that you would walk off a working set. He planted a seed.

**SS:** Of the films you made for James Whale, *THE KISS BEFORE THE MIRROR*, not being a horror film, is the least remembered.

**GS:** It starred Nancy Carroll and Paul Lukas. It was a Hungarian melodrama and I hardly had any dialogue in it.

**SS:** What can you tell us about *SECRET OF THE BLUE ROOM*?

**GS:** Universal had a deal with UFA [a combine of Universal, known as Universum Film Aktien Gesellschaft] of Germany, to use their film, so what they did was import the film, cut out all the interior scenes with the actors and just use the background. Then they shot the interior scenes with American actors. Well, it saved a lot of money.

**SS:** Have you seen the film?

**GS:** Not in the last 60 years! (Laughs)

**SS:** What work did you do for John Ford?

**GS:** I was in *AIR MAIL* in '32, with Pat O'Brien and Ralph Bellamy. That was only my third picture. Then in '36, at 20th Century, John asked for me for *THE PRISONER OF SHARK ISLAND*. I didn't have an experience with a lot of the great directors at Metro and the other studios, but I did have John Ford, who was wonderful, and George Stevens, who was wonderful.

**SS:** How long were you with 20th Century Fox?

**GS:** From about the end of 1935 to 1939. I spent three years at Universal, then three years at 20th. After I married Arthur Sheekman in 1934 and had my child in 1935, I said to him, "I don't want to go back to Universal." He spoke to his agent, who spoke to another agent, and they went to Zanuck and Zanuck bought my contract at 20th, which made me very happy.

**SS:** What kind of movie mogul was Darryl F. Zanuck?

**GS:** Tough. Right to the point. He cast me—or the studio casting director cast me—in a Shirley Temple picture . . .

**SS:** Whose idea was that?

**GS:** He didn't say. That wonderful actor, W.C. Fields, said, "Never be in a film with a child or a dog. You're dead." So when Zanuck told my agent I was to do a Shirley Temple, I went to Zanuck and said, "I don't want to do a Shirley Tem





**LEFT:** Lovebirds Gloria Stuart and Dick Powell are confronted by old buzzard Alice Brady in *GOLD DIGGERS OF 1935*. **RIGHT:** As if Claude Rains, Boris Karloff, Ernest Thesiger, and Lionel Atwill weren't enough, Gloria even managed to survive the Ritz Brothers—as did Don Ameche, in *THE THREE MUSKETEERS* (1939). **NEXT PAGE:** Randolph Scott, Shirley Temple, and Gloria Stuart in *REBECCA OF SUNNYBROOK FARM* (1938).

ple picture. It's not fair. I am a dramatic actress and I don't want to play her sister." He said, "Look, Gloria, millions of people who have never seen you will see you in this picture. She's the most popular star today and has been and will be for several years. And it is very foolish of you and you are going to play it." Well, he was right. It was very important. I was seen by millions of people who wouldn't have seen me.

**SS:** You made *POOR LITTLE RICH GIRL* [1936] and *REBECCA OF SUNNYBROOK FARM* [1938] with Shirley Temple.

**GS:** They were domestic comedies, and gave her a chance to sing and dance and be adorable, which she was. But she sang and danced in all of her films. Bill "Bojangles" Robinson was in *POOR LITTLE RICH GIRL*. Of course, he was a genius. I remember going over to the rehearsal stage and watching them rehearse, the two of them. He would show her a step. She'd get it. He'd show her another step. She did it. I mean, she was a genius. She was a miracle, an absolute miracle!

**SS:** Randolph Scott also appeared in *REBECCA OF SUNNYBROOK FARM*.

**GS:** Oh, he was darling. I don't know if he was as unhappy with his part as I was with mine! (Laughs)

**SS:** Talent aside, did you like Shirley?

**GS:** Oh, yes! I walked on the set and she said, "Good morning, Miss Stuart." She was so charming and so sweet. She was so unspoiled, so talented. She was adorable and she knew everybody's lines, a lot better than some of them knew their own lines. (Laughs) She was not officious, but when someone would blow it she'd say the line. She was just adorable. I made a second picture with her and then I didn't see her for years and years. Then the Academy of Arts and Sciences had a retrospective and honored her about seven years ago. There weren't very many of us left that worked with her... just Alice Faye, Cesar Romero, Don Ameche, and myself. So we went on the stage and Shirley had nice things to say about us and we had nice things to

say about Shirley. I had no stills from our films, because when I quit I burned everything... all my scripts, my stills. I said to Shirley, "I don't have any record of us being together," and she gave me a beautiful portrait.

**SS:** If you hated making a Shirley Temple film, you must not have been too happy co-starring with The Ritz Brothers in *THE THREE MUSKETEERS*.

**GS:** They were just enormously amusing. They never stopped clowning and it was a laugh all the way. No, I enjoyed working with them very much.

**SS:** You're very rarely asked about the musicals you made in the thirties. You were in *GOLD DIGGERS OF 1935*.

**GS:** Oh, my! I always say *GOLD DIGGERS OF 1910*, but it really was 1935. (Laughs) You know, I didn't really sing or anything in that. It was wonderful working with Dick Powell, because he was charming, and it was a good story. I loved the cast and my part. The other musical I made for Universal—I think I've forgotten the name of it; it was so awful!

**SS:** Well, actually we were thinking of a musical you made for Sam Goldwyn called *ROMAN SCANDALS*.

**GS:** Oh, *ROMAN SCANDALS*! Oh, that was wonderful, too. Lucille Ball was in that. She was a chorus girl, and she was so funny on the set that we all just enjoyed her. She really was a born clown and a darling.

**SS:** We interviewed your leading man, David Manners, just a few issues ago.

**GS:** You know, I didn't know that David was still with us, but I hear that he's in Santa Barbara. He retired very early. I'm so glad he's still with us.

**SS:** Eddie Cantor was the film's star.

**GS:** I didn't have much to do with Eddie. He was very much the star and I was the second lead, but he was certainly a gifted man.

**SS:** You mentioned Groucho Marx earlier, and that your husband, Arthur Sheekman, wrote for him. Your husband wrote for many comedians, didn't he?

**GS:** Oh, yes! George Burns, Fred Allen, Milton Berle, Groucho... I spent 40-odd years surrounded by some of the funniest people in the world. Groucho was really the catalyst, he'd have the others over all the time to entertain and we'd have wonderful parties. They were all poor boys. Most of them had never even finished grammar school.

**SS:** You were friends with Robert Benchley, too, weren't you?

**GS:** I love to tell this story. One Christmas Eve, I stopped by Benchley's house. I asked him who he was having Christmas dinner with and he said no one. I couldn't believe it. Here was this adorable, lovable man, and he was spending Christmas alone. So I asked him to join Arthur and myself and my mother. When I got home, the phone rang and it was Bob asking if Charlie Butterworth could join us. So I said, "Sure. We'd love to have Charlie." Then 15 minutes later he called and said, "Dotty Parker wants to come, too." Well, I told my mother they were coming, and how amusing they were, and how she was going to just love it. Dorothy Parker arrived, and she was all in black—her stockings, her dress, her hair, and her mood. She didn't say an amusing thing all day, and Mama kept staring at her, waiting for her to be funny. (Laughs)

**SS:** Why did you quit movies?

**GS:** I wasn't getting any roles that were challenging. I played girl reporters, girl detectives, society girls...

**SS:** What did you do after you left 20th Century Fox?

**GS:** My husband, Arthur, and I went around the world and stayed in New York until about 1941 or '42 and then we came back to Hollywood. I made three or four pictures after that: *SHE WROTE THE BOOK*, *HERE COMES ELMER*, *ENEMY OF WOMEN*, *THE WHISTLER*...

**SS:** *THE WHISTLER*?

**GS:** Yes, the original *WHISTLER*, in '44.

**SS:** That was produced by William Castle, who was later famous for his gimmicky horror movies.

GS: Yes, that was his first hit. He was very nice. He liked my work. He had seen the good pictures I had done. He was a very professional man.

SS: You quit acting, but resumed in the early seventies. Among the films you've done since then are *MY FAVORITE YEAR* and a comedy with Goldie Hawn.

GS: Yes, it was called *WILDCATS*. Goldie Hawn played the manager of a football team. I played one of the two school mams who were instructed to take care of her daughters. There was a wonderful scene where she said terrible things to her husband and these two old ladies sat around clicking and clacking. Goldie is great. She and Peter O'Toole

SS: On television, you appeared on *MURDER, SHE WROTE*.

GS: It was a wonderful story. And they had the most beautiful portrait of me painted, because it was part of the story, how I looked at that time. I played a patient in a wheelchair whose husband had been accused of a murder many, many, many years before. And Angela Lansbury and the patient's daughter were solving the murder mystery.

SS: Was *MURDER, SHE WROTE* your first television experience?

GS: Oh, no! The first one was with Elizabeth Montgomery in *THE LEGEND OF LIZZIE BORDEN*. I played the woman who saw her steal the ax and put it in her purse.

SS: What did you think of TV work compared to motion pictures or theater?

GS: It didn't seem much different. Well, compared to the theater, it's an enormous difference, because I did do some theater, too, around that time. I stopped because the hours and the demands of theater are simply enormous. You cannot do anything else. You wait all day to go on, you go on, you go home—usually around midnight or one o'clock—you go to bed, you get up, you can't do anything all day because you don't want to be tired at night. When there's a matinee, you sleep in the theater! It's very wearying and, at that point, at my age and with my reputation, I didn't need to prove anything to anybody. It was not enjoyable. It was a big, big chore, so I didn't do anything after that.

SS: Peter O'Toole is a favorite actor of yours. Who is your favorite actress?

GS: I would say Jane Fonda.

SS: And how about actresses of the past? Who was your favorite actress back in the days when you were going to the movies as a teenager?

GS: Garbo! Magic, magic, magic!

SS: You got into painting. What inspired you to do that?

GS: I had stopped acting, and I'm very creative. I am driven. This was after the war—I started about 1954. Bogie had made *THE BAREFOOT CONTESSA* in Europe and, when he came back, he told us we had to visit Portofino. Well, we went to Europe for a year and stopped to visit our daughter in Paris, where she was studying at the Sorbonne, and she took me to Jeu de Paume, and for the first time I saw the great Impres-

sionists. The post-Impressionists. I was overwhelmed! When we got to our villa, I bought an Italian/English dictionary and a book in Italian on how to paint. I bought an easel and canvas and I started to paint. I made my solo debut, a one-woman show at the Armand Hammer Galleries in New York City, in 1961. I have also had shows in Austria and other European countries. Here in the States, I've had shows in Houston, Palm Springs, San Francisco, Beverly Hills, and Los Angeles.

SS: And what type of paintings do you do?

GS: I'm a primitive.

SS: You also print extremely beautiful miniature books.

GS: Yes. I set the type and print it on my hand press, and then my binder puts it together.

SS: In 1993, you appeared at the FM Con in Arlington, Virginia. What do you think of the fans of your horror movies?

GS: They're wonderful. Because there are so many great movies that are not in this genre, I'm really astounded that this particular genre brings so many people out to conventions and obviously involves so many people. You know, I understand film in the broad sense and I certainly am thrilled with these people. It's just wonderful what they do and what they say.

SS: And now even more people are becoming aware of your work through *TITANIC*'s success. Most of your scenes in the film are with Bill Paxton.

Continued on page 73





# WARNER OLAND

## MASTER OF MENACE AND MYSTERY

by David K. Bowman

The mere mention of mystery, menace, and the Orient to an aficionado of the films of the twenties and thirties invariably calls to mind Warner Oland, the one actor whose career embodied all these qualities and more.

Even his origin was enigmatic, for although Warner Oland looked Asian, he was actually Swedish—and by every report, never used a bit of makeup for his famous Oriental roles.

"I owe my Chinese appearance to the Mongol invasion," he once told Keye Luke, his frequent costar. In a long-ago incursion all the way into Sweden and Finland, Mongol blood was fused, according to Oland, with that of his forefathers—and so, as he told Luke of his Oriental appearance, "I come by it naturally."

"And his whole family looked like that," Luke later told an interviewer. There was never any need for much makeup. "All he did was put that little goatee on his chin. Otherwise, he had his own mustache. Everything was just like that. No makeup. It's amazing. Just amazing."

When Oland visited the Orient for the first time in the spring of 1937, he was surprised when he was greeted enthusiastically in Chinese. In fact, everyone there was convinced he was Chinese. Later in his trip, when Oland went to Japan, he was received very much the same way by the Japanese!

By the time of his sudden death in the summer of 1938, Warner Oland had created one of the most remarkable and beloved characterizations in the history of motion pictures, Charlie Chan. For this achievement alone, he will always be remembered. However, he also had behind him a distinguished 30 year career as a linguist, intellectual, and stage actor.

A man of many talents, Warner Oland was born on October 3, 1880, in Umea, Vesterbotten, Sweden. Although his full name was Jonah Werner Ohlund, he would be known by his wife and friends in later life as simply "Jack." When he was 13, his parents, Jonas and Maria Ohlund, moved with him and his brother, Carl, to America, settling on a farm in Connecticut. Oland must have loved the area, for he later bought a farm in Massachusetts, where he stayed periodically for the rest of his life.

Between films, the tired actor would renew himself by milking several of his herd of New England cows or by chopping wood. During 1922 and 1923, he and his wife retreated to the farm and spent much time translating Strindberg into English. He and his wife were both multilingual and she even learned Swedish, the better to help him in his translation.

Young Oland first got involved in acting when, with a number of other youths, he staged a play at the factory where he worked in New Britain, Connecticut. The play made little money and Oland's boyhood friend, George Quigley (later the mayor of New Britain), who also worked at the factory, later had to attach Oland's bicycle to cover the printing bill for the play!

According to his studio biography, when Oland graduated from high school, he wanted to be a judge. However, something quickly derailed this aspiration, as he almost immediately enrolled in the Curry Dramatic School to improve his voice.

It was during this period that Oland's career in acting got its formal start. Going backstage with some friends at a local theater after a performance of *THE CHRISTIAN* by Sarah Bernhardt's company, he received an offer to play the part of Jesus. Accepting the role, which included singing as well as acting, he eventually went on tour with the company at a salary of \$18 per week. By the time Warner Oland achieved success in films in the early twenties, he had put in 14 years as an actor on the stage.

After a year on the road with *THE CHRISTIAN*, Oland played a two year engagement with Viola Allen





Among the many silent movies featuring Warner Oland are 1920's *THIRD EYE* (LEFT) and 1919's *THE LIGHTNING RAIDER*, in which the actor played (surprise!) a sinister Oriental villain.

in *THE ETERNAL CITY*, and then went on to a season in repertory with Southern & Marlowe at an increased salary.

Over the next couple of years, Oland was heavily involved with plays by Henrik Ibsen and worked with such greats as Alla Nazimova in *THE MASTER BUILDER* and *A DOLL'S HOUSE*. After his work with Nazimova, Oland took the money he had saved and went to work on an English translation of Ibsen's *PEER GYNT*, producing the play in 1908. (It was a great success and made Oland considerable money.)

During the run of *PEER GYNT* at a Boston theater, Oland met Edith Shearn, a young art student fresh from the salons of Paris. Shearn was producing and acting in some one-act plays and a friend asked her if she wanted to meet the new Scandinavian actor

Wearing a straw hat with a bright band and carrying a white poodle, Oland looked, Mrs. Oland later said, like something out of Manet's "Afternoon on the Boisi!"

The couple was married during the run of *PEER GYNT*. When the play closed, Mr. and Mrs. Oland moved to Williams College. There they produced plays for the college and the Cap and Bells dramatic society. For the next several years, Oland also produced plays at the Hudson Theatre in New York, an endeavor that cost him most of his profits from *GYNT*. As a result, Oland, who had already made at least one film appearance, was very amenable to motion picture work, which seemed to be much more lucrative than theater.

Sources disagree on exactly which film furnished Warner Oland with his debut, but it's likely that Oland's

LEFT: A remarkably slender Warner Oland appeared in the silent *EAST IS WEST* (1922). The actor made his "all-talking" debut in *THE STUDIO MURDER MYSTERY* (1929).







first picture was *THE JEWELS OF THE MADONNA* (circa 1909), in which he appeared with Hollywood legend Theda Bara. Several years later Oland appeared in *THE LIFE OF JOHN BUNYAN*, *THE PH GRIM'S PROGRESS* (1912). However, film historians often overlook Oland's first, two films and credit his appearance in *SIN* (1915), which paired him again with Bara, as his official debut. *SIN* was a five-reeler from Fox and provided the fledgling film actor with his first real taste of celluloid evil-doing. It wasn't long, though, before Oland reached his first milestone in villainy in the serial *PATRIA* (1917). Mounted to raise the patriotic spirits of a country that had just entered the First World War, *PATRIA* went into production in January 1917 and took three months to complete.

The actor originally cast as the villain turned out to be too short for the part. (The actress playing the heroine, dance legend Irene Castle, was taller and more imposing.) The director was desperate for an Oriental looking actor, Warner Oland happened to be available in nearby Fort Lee and was summoned by the casting director. At six feet and nearly 200 pounds, Oland was immediately hired. *PATRIA* would contain the first of many Oriental characterizations for Warner Oland.

Later the same year, Oland appeared in the Pearl White serial *THE LATAI RING*. This film unquestionably established him as one of Hollywood's top heavies. By then, although not always happy with making serials, Oland was definitely happy with the \$1,000 a week salary he was earning, a sizable amount for the time.

Next, Oland made *CONVICT 993*, reteaming with Irene Castle. *CONVICT 993* was the first of four films Oland made in 1918, all released through Pathé, that helped solidify his image of evil. In *THE NAULAHKA*, in particular, Oland got great critical reviews for his role as a drug-ridden maharajah.

By early 1919, Oland had begun making *THE LIGHTNING RAIDER*, a 15-chapter Pearl White serial. Again, he was cast as an Oriental villain, Fu Wang. Given second billing under Henry G. Sell, Oland rose to top billing within a year with *THE HILARY EYE* (1920). By then, he was regarded as the best and highest paid villain in motion pictures.

Oland's prolific output in films continued for two more years, then dropped during 1922-23, when he and his wife retreated to their Massachusetts farm to transmute Strindberg. They collaborated on a remarkable 12 volumes of material. Oland seems to have briefly considered a literary career at this time, but was finally drawn back to films in 1924, making four to five per year from then until the end of the silent era.

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screen villainy. Ironically, Oland only had one line of audible dialogue in *THE JAZZ SINGER*: he interrupts star Al Jolson in the middle of a snappy rendition of Irving Berlin's "Blue Skies" by shouting "Stop!" The rest of Oland's lines in this first "talking picture" were provided by titles.

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Oland made one last appearance as Fu Manchu in a satirical skit entitled "Murder Will Out" in *PARAMOUNT ON PARADE* (1931). The film was shot in both Technicolor and black and white. The Technicolor sections unfortunately, are now gone, but the black and white portions, which includes "Murder Will Out," thankfully survive. Oland was teamed with Olive Brook as Sherlock Holmes and William Powell as Philo Vance in this spoof of detective stories, which marks the only time these famous characters have ever met on screen—or off.

Warner Oland was now the King of Movie Villains. But just as he reached his peak in evil-doing, he was cast in a role that ultimately overshadowed all that had come before. In 1931, Oland was picked for the part of Earl Dorr Biggers' popular Chinese sleuth, Charlie Chan, and became a nice guy at last in *CHARLIE CHAN CARRIES ON*.

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Even in *CHARLIE CHAN CARRIES ON*, the studio kept Chan out of the plot until at least the halfway point—though, in this case, they were simply following the dictates of the Biggers novel on which the film was based. Luckily, Oland's performance was so personable that, even with a delayed appearance in the story, he immediately dominated the proceedings and inaugurated the Golden Age of Charlie Chan films.

The story concerns a series of murders on an around-the-world cruise. *CHARLIE CHAN CARRIES ON* also featured as a subplot a romance between two of the characters. This device became a staple of most subsequent Chan films. At the end, Charlie plays Cupid, sending a cable to his friend Inspector Duff detailing his solution of the mystery and adding, "Miss Potter and Mr. Kenaway have decided that two shall be one. More later!"

*CHARLIE CHAN CARRIES ON* is the only one of Oland's Chan efforts that has never been available to viewers in TV packages. Now, no print is known to exist and this interesting film is sadly lost. (The film was reworked in 1940, when it appeared as *CHARLIE CHAN'S MURDER CRUISE* with Sidney Toler. The script was altered so that Charlie could appear from the onset.)

With *CHARLIE CHAN CARRIES ON*, Charlie at last caught on with the motion-picture public, and Warner Oland continued for the next seven years to mystify and entertain audiences around the world as the jovial but wise Honolulu police lieutenant, who never failed to solve a case or come up with the correct aphorism for the occasion.

By the time the second mystery in the sound-era series, *THE BLACK CAMEL* (1931), went into production, the studio realized it had something and Chan became the major character. (Both the film and the Biggers book on which it is based took their title from the old proverb, "Death is a black camel that kneels unbid at every gate.")

Far from being a programmer, *THE BLACK CAMEL* was actually lensed on lo-

**LEFT** In these three dramatic moments from *WERE WOLF OF LONDON* (1935), Dr. Yoganai (Warner Oland) points to a telltale scar on the arm of Wilfred Glendon (Henry Hull), is caught by Glendon after he steals the antidote to lycanthropy, and meets his doom when Glendon, denied the cure, turns into a snarling wolf man. **BELOW**, Dr. Fu Manchu (Oland) is comforted by his loyal *DALGHTER OF THE DRAGON* (1931)

cation in Honolulu, an unusual procedure in an age when most film exteriors were shot on the backlot. The cast included Bela Lugosi and Dwight Frye (both fresh from *DRACULA*), as well as Robert Young and beloved character actress Mary Gordon (later to win immortality as Mrs. Hudson in Basil Rathbone's Sherlock Holmes movies and radio shows).

Since there was no Number One Son at this stage in the Chan series, Charlie was saddled with a Biggers creation, Kashimo, an overzealous Japanese assistant. Zany, hyper, and completely obnoxious, Kashimo provides some very effective comic relief. (In an early scene, he rushes into a room and exclaims, "Clue!" "Clue? What clue?" asks his baffled superior. "No clue!" Kashimo snaps. "Just clue!")

*THE BLACK CAMEL* offers the first look at Charlie's wife and children at home in Honolulu. The family would pop in and out of the Chan films for years to come. A good example is *CHARLIE CHAN AT THE CIRCUS* (1936), in which the entire Chan clan troops through the circus tent. Charlie finally appears at the end of the parade of Chans, his arms full, a sheepish grin on his face, and a bunch of tickets in his hat band.

In the early months of 1932, Fox released *CHARLIE CHAN'S CHANCE*, a remake of *BEHIND THAT CURTAIN*. In June, Chan is visiting New York and gets involved in the mysterious demise of a Scotland Yard inspector, who apparently dies of a heart attack. But a dead cat in the room convinces the sleuth that the death was not natural.

Critic Mordaunt Hall credited Warner Oland with being "the mainstay of this picture," which included such aphorisms as "This is unexpected as squiff from aggressive grapefruit" and "My day's work has been useless as life preserver for fish."

In the fall of 1933, Fox finally got around to filming Earl Dorr Biggers' first Chan novel, *The House Without a Key* (1935). Titled *CHARLIE CHAN'S GREATEST CASE* (1933), it was the last Chan directed by Hampton MacFadden. Unfortunately, *GREATEST CASE* is another film that is still lost and little information survives about it.

During the thirties, Warner Oland appeared in few roles other than Charlie Chan. In one of his most memorable non-





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musical voice and mild manner always belied a profound intellect and keen sense of observation. Many a murderer made the fatal mistake of underestimating the detective.

Before Oland came along, Fox Studios had produced two Chan films, *THE CHINESE PARROT* (1926) and *BEHIND THAT CURTAIN* (1929). Both were thought lost until a few years ago, when a print of the latter miraculously surfaced. *BEHIND THAT CURTAIN* has since been made available on video, but *THE CHINESE PARROT* still remains in the nether world of lost cinema. In these initial outings, the role of Charlie Chan was downplayed to the point of nonexistence. The studio, in an obvious show of prejudice, simply didn't think the character to be of much interest!

Even in *CHARLIE CHAN CARRIES ON*, the studio kept Chan out of the plot until at least the halfway point—though, in this case, they were simply following the dictates of the Biggers novel on which the film was based. Luckily, Oland's performance was so personable that, even with a delayed appearance in the story, he immediately dominated the proceedings and inaugurated the Golden Age of Charlie Chan films.

The story concerns a series of murders on an around-the-world cruise. *CHARLIE CHAN CARRIES ON* also featured as a subplot a romance between two of the characters. This device became a staple of most subsequent Chan films. At the end, Charlie plays Cupid, sending a cable to his friend Inspector Duff detailing his solution of the mystery and adding, "Miss Potter and Mr. Kenaway have decided that two shall be one. More later!"

*CHARLIE CHAN CARRIES ON* is the only one of Oland's Chan efforts that has never been available to viewers in TV packages. Now, no print is known to exist and this interesting film is sadly lost. (The film was reworked in 1940 when it appeared as *CHARLIE CHAN'S MURDER CRUISE* with Sidney Toler. The script was altered so that Charlie could appear from the onset.)

With *CHARLIE CHAN CARRIES ON*, Charlie at last caught on with the motion-picture public, and Warner Oland continued for the next seven years to mystify and entertain audiences around the world as the jovial but wise Honolulu police lieutenant, who never failed to solve a case or come up with the correct aphorism for the occasion.

By the time the second mystery in the sound-era series, *THE BLACK CAMEL* (1931), went into production, the studio realized it had something and Chan became the major character. (Both the film and the Biggers book on which it is based took their title from the old proverb: "Death is a black camel that kneels unbid at every gate.")

Far from being a programmer, *THE BLACK CAMEL* was actually lensed on lo-

cation in Honolulu, an unusual procedure in an age when most film exteriors were shot on the back lot. The cast included Bela Lugosi and Dwight Frye (both fresh from *DRACULA*), as well as Robert Young and beloved character actress Mary Gordon (later to win immortality as Mrs. Hudson in Basil Rathbone's Sherlock Holmes movies and radio shows).

Since there was no Number One Son at this stage in the Chan series, Charlie was saddled with a Biggers creation: Kashimo, an overzealous Japanese assistant. Zany, hyper, and completely obtuse, Kashimo provides some very effective comic relief. (In an early scene, he rushes into a room and exclaims, "Clue!" "Clue? What case?" asks his baffled superior. "No case!" Kashimo snaps. "Just clue!")

*THE BLACK CAMEL* offers the first look at Charlie's wife and children at home in Honolulu. The family would pop in and out of the Chan films for years to come. A good example is *CHARLIE CHAN AT THE CIRCUS* (1936), in which the entire Chan clan troops through the circus tent. Charlie finally appears at the end of the parade of Chans, his arms full, a sheepish grin on his face, and a bunch of tickets in his hat band!

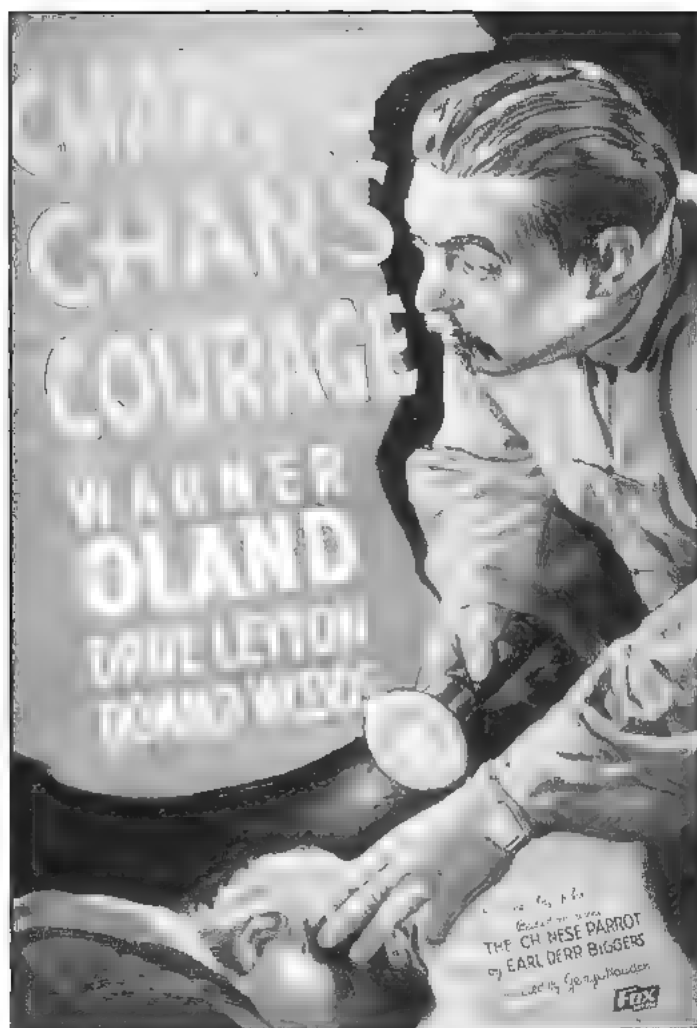
In the early months of 1932, Fox released *CHARLIE CHAN'S CHANCE*, a remake of *BEHIND THAT CURTAIN*. This time, Chan is visiting New York and gets involved in the mysterious demise of a Scotland Yard inspector, who apparently dies of a heart attack. But a dead cat in the room convinces the sleuth that the death was not natural.

Critic Mordaunt Hall credited Warner Oland with being "the mainstay of this picture," which included such aphorisms as "This is unexpected as squirt from aggressive grapefruit" and "My day's work has been useless as life preserver for fish."

In the fall of 1933, Fox finally got around to filming a Earl Derr Biggers' first Chan novel, *The House Without a Key* (1925). Titled *CHARLIE CHAN'S GREATEST CASE* (1933), it was the last Chan directed by Hamilton MacFadden. Unfortunately, *GREATEST CASE* is another film that is still lost and little information survives about it.

During the thirties, Warner Oland appeared in few roles other than Charlie Chan. In one of his most memorable non-





Chan roles, Oland played a Chinese general opposite Marlene Dietrich in the legendary *SHANGHAI EXPRESS* (1932), under the direction of the equally legendary Josef Von Sternberg. Renowned for his dictatorial directing style and endless retakes, Von Sternberg was probably the most difficult director of Warner Oland's career.

"They call me One Shot Warner," Oland is reported to have told Von Sternberg half-seriously. This failed to impress the director, who perfectionistically inflicted countless retakes on the hapless actor.

In another classic non Chan role, Warner Oland chilled audiences in Universal's *WEREWOLF OF LONDON* (1935), opposite Henry Hull. Although the film was initially regarded as a good but not great effort, over the years its reputation has grown, until it is now justifiably regarded as a horror classic.

*WEREWOLF* featured Oland in the role of the mysterious Dr. Yogami, an Oriental physician afflicted with lycanthropy. Yogami vies ruthlessly with an English scientist for the rare buds of a plant that only blooms by moonlight and which is the only known cure for lycanthropy. Early in the story, in a scene set in Tibet, viewers are treated to a brief flash of Warner Oland in a brilliant werewolf makeup by Jack Pierce.

During the making of the film, Universal went to great lengths to concoct a recording of a believable werewolf howl. At one point, before the studio ended up creating a composite recording (both animal and human), various cast members, including Oland, had a try at the howl in the sound department!

*CHARLIE CHAN'S COURAGE* (1934) was the last film in the Oland series actually to be based on a Biggers novel, and also the latest of the series to become lost, doubtless a victim of the remarkable apathy of film studios toward their product. Apparently a faithful remake of *THE CHINESE PARROT*, this one finds Charlie masquerading as a servant in the desert home of a millionaire, where he secretly investigates the man to whom he is to turn over a valuable string of pearls.

The film took a beating at the hands of some critics, but until a print of the film surfaces, it will never be known if they were right about *CHARLIE CHAN'S COURAGE*.

After Earl Derr Biggers' death in 1933, Philip MacDonald was hired as writer for the film series. MacDonald sent Charlie on a series of globe-trotting adventures that began with *CHARLIE CHAN IN LONDON* (1935), the first Chan not based on a novel. (There are only six Biggers Chan books, one of which, 1932's *Keeper of the Keys*, was never filmed.) This is the oldest of the Chan series still in general circulation and is somewhat uneven in quality. Chan attempts to clear a man wrongly convicted of murder. "No time to expose lies, must expose truth," Charlie remarks. More murders occur on an English country estate, where Chan encounters his first racial slur from a snide Cockney maid, who warns that the "creeping Chinaman" will murder the household in their beds.

"Man without family, man without troubles," Charlie observes in *CHARLIE CHAN IN PARIS* (1936). This film, which concerns bond forgeries, introduced screen legend Keye Luke as Charlie Chan's Number One Son, Lee Chan. Luke shined throughout his many appearances as Charlie's first born, who was frequently helpful and often inept. It also marked the first of four appearances in Chan mysteries by Fox contract player Thomas Beck. In an interview in *Scarlet Street* #9, Beck reminisced about the fact that the film was filled with French characters, and yet there wasn't a French accent in earshot.

"You must remember that sound films were quite new, then, and they hadn't thought it through that much. They were really very fortunate to get any sound recordings at all!"

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# KEYE TO THE MYSTERY KEYE LUKE

interviewed by Joe Collura

A veteran of Hollywood for more than 50 years, Keye Luke belonged to that great assembly of supporting players, commonly called character people, who went from film to film turning in excellent performances—yet, rarely receiving the praise they deserved.

Today, the Chinese-American actor is best remembered for his regular role in the Charlie Chan features, in which he played the famous detective's Number One Son, Lee. But there are fans who also know him as Kato, Britt Reid's Oriental sidekick in the Green Hornet serials; or Lee Wong Howe, the dedicated intern in the Dr. Gillespie series; or Po, the blind monk proficient in Asian philosophy and martial arts in the television show, KUNG FU.

Even so, recognition of Luke's contributions to the performing arts came late. In 1986, he won the first Lifetime Achievement Award bestowed by the Association of Asian/Pacific American Artists, and in 1990, he was honored with a sidewalk star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. Mostly, though, he had to be content in just knowing that there were moviegoers and TV viewers who liked what he did.

I first met Keye Luke in 1978 at a film seminar, after which I communicated with him through the mail and over the phone. Extremely easy to talk with, he always seemed happy to discuss his career

and "set the record straight" on certain aspects of his past life. For example, he was born in China, on June 18, 1904, but, contrary to several reference sources, that country was never truly his home. His parents simply happened to be visiting Canton on a vacation trip at the time. The other siblings, three brothers and two sisters, all were born in the United States.

Keye's father owned an art store in San Francisco. From an early age, Keye showed a keen appreciation of paintings, as well as pen-and-ink drawings. After the elder Luke passed away, the family moved to Seattle, where Keye grew up and attended Franklin High School. In later years, he studied architecture and design at the University of Washington.

Subsequent to settling in Los Angeles, Keye became a commercial artist and poster designer. He entered the motion picture industry through the exhibition end of the business, by doing artwork for a movie theater.

"I was a publicity artist for Graumann's Chinese Theatre that Fox in part owned," related





LEFT: Keye Luke, Warner Oland, and Louise Henry register surprise at an unexpected plot twist in **CHARLIE CHAN ON BROADWAY** (1937). RIGHT: Luke lent surgical assistance to Peter Lorre (as the sexually obsessed Dr. Gogol) in the classic **MAD LOVE** (1935).

Luke. Smiling, he added, "The studio figured that, since they had a Chinese theater, they should have a Chinese artist. That's the way we reasoned in Hollywood in those days."

Keye was assigned to create the advertising art for the Charlie Chan detective pictures Fox was currently making. He remembered some of his superiors telling him that drawing Chinese characters "should be right down your alley." Later, his immediate boss left Fox to go to MGM, and the replacement, a Columbia University graduate named Gabriel York, turned out to be a very smooth, New York showman, who allowed Keye to sometimes serve as technical advisor on films with Chinese themes.

"That relationship lasted for awhile, then I went to RKO," outlined Luke. "There I worked for David O. Selznick, who had recently come to power as production chief for RKO Radio and RKO Pathé, on such projects as the publicity for **KING KONG** [1933]."

It was at RKO that Keye first appeared in front of a motion picture camera. The studio needed a Chinese person who could speak explicit English, and though the film was only a short subject, Luke became so enthralled by the experience that he decided to put aside his artist's ambitions to pursue an acting career instead.

Keye's feature film debut occurred in Greta Garbo's **THE PAINTED VEIL** (1934), in which he had a small part as a Chinese doctor. For one scene, the famous Swedish-born actress and Luke were working on a treadmill several feet above the stage. When the conveyer jerked forward, Garbo lost her balance and Keye caught her. "She thanked me in that wonderful thick voice of hers," said Luke, "and later I shook her hand . . . I was on cloud nine for weeks afterwards."

Keye played another physician in his next movie, **MAD LOVE** (1935). As the bespectacled Dr. Wong, he assists the crazed Dr. Gogol (Peter Lorre) in grafting the hands of a murderer (Edward Brophy) onto the wrists of an accidentally maimed pianist (Colin Clive). Both **THE PAINTED VEIL** and **MAD LOVE** were made at MGM, the most prestigious studio in Hollywood, yet, neither picture did very much to advance Luke's aspirations, and it wasn't until he received a phone call from his former supervisor Gabe York, at Fox, that he landed his first real professional break.

"It's the typical Hollywood success story that you hear about, but are reluctant to believe," remarked Luke. "If somebody had planned it to happen that way, it never would have worked out . . . The head of advertising at Fox

LEFT: Luke (as Lee Chan) reunited with Lorre for **MR. MOTO'S GAMBLE** (1938), which had begun life as **CHARLIE CHAN AT RINGSIDE**. After Warner Oland's death, a hasty rewrite transferred the Chan film into a Moto movie. RIGHT: In 1939, Luke played the karate-chopping Kato opposite Gordon Jones as **THE GREEN HORNET**.





phoned me: 'Hey, Keye, I understand you're turning actor.' Then he made a little joke, referring to me as the next 'Cantonese ham.' He told me to come see him at the new studio Fox had built in Beverly Hills, so I did, and was immediately taken to the casting director, Phil Friedman, a very nice man. 'Damn, Keye, I wish you'd been here yesterday,' Friedman said. 'I had a beautiful part of a Japanese spy who tries to blow up the Panama Canal that I gave to Leslie Fenton. Why don't you go down and check with Jim Ryan?' At that time, Fox had two studios, the one on Pico Boulevard adjacent to Beverly Hills and its older one at Western Avenue and Sunset Boulevard, where Jim Ryan was the casting director.

"It just so happens," said Ryan, 'they are thinking of putting a son into the Charlie Chan pictures. But I can't promise anything till I clear it with the screenwriter.' Now, the author was Philip MacDonald, who had done a marvelous story that director Jack Ford made into *THE LOST PATROL* [1934, a big success for RKO]. I had done the advertising art on *THE LOST PATROL*, so I knew MacDonald. 'Hello, Keye!' exclaimed the writer after Ryan had handed me the phone. 'I understand you want to play Charlie Chan's number one son. Well, I hadn't envisioned that part as being very large, but now that I know you're playing it, I'll write a real part in the picture for you.' And he did. After the preview of *CHARLIE CHAN IN PARIS* [1935], the producer, Sol Wurtzel, came up and offered to sign me to a contract to do more of the Chan films. I was ecstatic."

In 1929, Fox had filmed a mystery entitled *BEHIND THAT CURTAIN*, starring Warner Baxter. In the picture, Charlie Chan, as portrayed by E.L. Park, was only a subordinate character, yet it was already the third time that the Earl Derr Biggers police detective had appeared on the screen. Then, in 1931, Fox cast Warner Oland in the role in *CHARLIE CHAN CARRIES ON*. What proceeded was a long and prosperous series of movies for both the actor and parent studio. (For more about Oland, turn to *WARNER OLAND: MASTER OF MENACE AND MYSTERY* on page 36.)

When Biggers wrote his first Charlie Chan book in 1925, *The House Without a Key*, the concept of a Chinese figure on the side of law and order was a rather new idea in the United States. It was a change of pace for Oland as well. As Chan, he had to work against the commonly held stereotype of villainous screen Orientals by becoming the embodiment of a highly trained intellect with vast powers of deductive reasoning (used for solving crimes instead of perpetrating them). In addition, he had to convey trust, warmth, and even charm. The enduring success of the Charlie Chan films is testimony to his success.

Before Keye Luke was introduced into the series, six Warner Oland Chans already had been released, and the relatively high production values, initiated at the beginning of the run, had started to be lowered a bit. In addition to helping compensate for this, Keye's character was supposed to attract younger moviegoers who might readily identify with an eager, inquisitive son trying (often unsuccessfully) to follow in his father's footsteps. The mild conflicts that inevitably erupted between the old and new orders became one of the anticipated comic elements in the films. When Keye would respond to a reprimand

from his father for some impetuous act with, "Gee, Pop!" he seemed to be defending an entire well-meaning, inexperienced generation.

Keye Luke described his relationship with Warner Oland as more than that of two coworkers, or even friends. It was rather like the bond between a teacher and student. "I must say—looking back—Warner Oland was to me the only Charlie Chan," Keye stated sincerely. "He truly was a creative actor, a man who could submerge his personality beneath that of the part he was playing to give you a character that was believable and well-rounded. Warner came by his Oriental looks naturally. He was Swedish and Finnish. I remember he used to say, 'I am the residue of the Mongol invasion.' His whole family looked like that."

"He was easy to work with. You might say he wet-nursed me; he brought me up in the business. He was a humble man. Whenever we had a two-shot, he'd say, 'Fifty-fifty.' He taught me that even the smallest scene is like a

story unto itself. It has a beginning, middle, and end—a design and structure of its own—independent of the rest of the film. I never forgot that."

No longer a young man when he was making the Chan movies, Warner Oland frequently had trouble remembering his lines. Astutely, however, he worked that slight deficiency into the fabric of his screen character, who thought in Chinese, but spoke mostly in English—thus accounting for the detective's slow, precise speech and occasional fumbling of a word.

"It's true that Warner's memory wasn't as sharp as it had been when he was doing Shakespeare and Strindberg on the stage in New York," confirms Luke. "And when he would blow a line, he had all kinds of odd excuses for it. He had a stand-in named Alex, and even when this guy wasn't on the set, Warner might suddenly stop in the middle of a scene and say, 'Alex, why you rustle newspaper when Papa try to remember

lines?' Or, maybe, he would look down at the floor in mid-sentence and—standing well within his camera marks—say, 'Oh, so sorry, honorable cameraman, Papa not do marks.'"

Keye said that, even though the Chan films were regarded as B pictures or double-bill material, he was proud of what they had accomplished in the way of entertainment. Each entry in the series had a four-week shooting schedule, plus additional time for retakes if necessary. They were separately budgeted from \$250,000 to \$275,000. Sets were hand-me-downs from Fox's more expensive A productions. Nevertheless, given those restraints, the Charlie Chans became one of the most well-known and accepted blocks of movies ever made.

Keye's favorite film in the series was *CHARLIE CHAN AT THE OPERA* (1936). He loved working with Boris Karloff, who played Gravelle, the story's primary police suspect in a dual murder. Luke described Karloff as the "most mild-mannered man you ever met." In one of the scenes, when Gravelle was chasing Lee Chan through the opera house attic, Keye got so excited that he tripped going down a flight of stairs and sprained his ankle.

In 1938, Warner Oland died, and Fox (which had become 20th Century Fox after a 1935 merger) was under-



Keye Luke and David Carradine in *KUNG FU*

standably reluctant to cancel the hit series. That meant finding a replacement for Oland, and their final choice was a six-foot-tall, Missouri-born actor of Scottish descent named Sidney Toler. In the meantime, Keye Luke's contract with Fox expired, freeing him to accept some of the film offers he had been getting from other studios. Victor Sen Yung, playing Number Two Son Jimmy, accompanied Toler through the latter's 22 films as Chan.

In addition to the Chan mysteries, Fox produced a series featuring the famous Japanese detective (Japanese spy in the original stories by John P. Marquand) Mr. Moto, starring Peter Lorre. Before his departure from Fox, Keye Luke appeared as Lee in *MR. MOTO'S GAMBLE* (1938), which incorporated some scenes from an unfinished Chan film, *CHARLIE CHAN AT RINGSIDE*, in production when Warner Oland fell ill. (Norman Foster, who directed six of the eight Motos and who worked on many of the scripts, also directed several of the Sidney Toler Chans.)

Unlike his Chinese counterpart, Moto was forced off the screen by world events, when tensions between the United States and Japan increased in the late thirties. During World War II, Hollywood was called on by the Office of War Information to distinguish between Japanese and Chinese characters—the former being an enemy, the latter an ally—but, just as had been the norm two decades before, both Japanese and Chinese actors often found themselves in stereotyped roles, playing sly villains who spoke in cryptic riddles, more proficient in the art of torture than in tracking down lawbreakers.

Following Pearl Harbor, Keye Luke played his share of Japanese enemy roles in WWII films. In *ACROSS THE PA-*

*CIFIC* (1942), starring Humphrey Bogart and Mary Astor, he was especially devious as a steamship booking agent plotting against Americans. However, more often than not, Luke was seen as the loyal Chinese ally who helped his American partner fight the Axis powers in films such as *A YANK ON THE BURMA ROAD* (1942), generally credited as being the first Hollywood movie to acknowledge the United States' entry into the war.

Contributing to Keye Luke's "good guy" image was the conspicuous role he had played in two Universal serials: *THE GREEN HORNET* (1939) and *THE GREEN HORNET STRIKES AGAIN* (1940). George W. Trendle, who created the Lone Ranger, also came up with the Hornet (the characters were supposedly blood related), another popular radio personality adapted into a successful film serial. Universal initially cast Gordon Jones in the dual role of *Daily Sentinel* publisher Britt Reid and the crime-avenging Green Hornet ("the insect most deadly when disturbed"), while Keye Luke alternated between being Reid's houseboy/chauffeur and the goggled Kato, who provided his master with secret weapons and steadfastly fought by his side.

Interestingly, Luke was one of the first actors to introduce the karate chop to the moviegoing public. Though slight of build (he stood about 5'6"), he had little trouble defending himself against larger adversaries. Keye said these David/Goliath confrontations became quite challenging, and in those instances when he couldn't reach high enough to bring his hand down on the back of an opponent's neck, the situations were staged (by positioning him on some stairs or even a box out of camera range) to compensate for the differences in height and make what appeared on the screen seem possible.

Gordon Jones, a former football star at the University of California at Los Angeles and destined to achieve his most lasting fame as Mike the Cop on *THE ABBOTT AND COSTELLO SHOW* on TV, handled his action scenes believably, too, but his voice wasn't quite right for those scenes when he played the Green Hornet. Ultimately, Al Hodge, who played the character on radio, was brought out to Hollywood from the East and used to dub in the dialogue of the masked crusader.

"I heard something about that," said Keye, "but I really can't add anything. Gordon was the sort of All-American type. He was very prominent and I thought made a very, very good Green Hornet. Then when we made the second one, *THE GREEN HORNET STRIKES AGAIN*, the studio had Warren Hull play it. Warren was a very suave kind of player, whereas, Gordon was big, rough, and tough—but very good just the same. Why they switched over, I don't know. I never could understand that, because I thought Gordon was doing very well."

Keye Luke was not under long-term contract to Universal when he played Kato; hence, he was free to accept a variety of offers from different companies, and said he was happy to receive the work. Yes, he had listened to *THE GREEN HORNET* on radio, but certainly never thought he would one day end up essaying one of the lead roles on the screen. As far as serial production went, he considered Universal extremely well-run and most efficient in that field.

"Oh, yeah," emphasized Luke. "In that particular department, Universal certainly excelled. They had a tradition of making the best serials, the most important serials, and of attracting the better actors. . . . We were freelancing there all the time. For a long period, Henry MacRae was in charge of serial production, and he was a very colorful person. An actor once himself, Henry had quite a style about him; he'd always appear with a carnation in his lapel and wear two suits every day. During the morning, he'd be attired in one ensemble, then for the afternoon hours, change into something else. . . . We used to get quite a kick out of that."

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## WARNER OLAND

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The second Chan film based on an original story, *CHARLIE CHAN IN PARIS* was also considered lost for quite a long time. Happily, a print resurfaced a few years ago.

Oland has some wonderful scenes in the film. At one point, Charlie leaves Lee on watch in front of a bank. "Observe closely," the elder Chan says. "Observe what?" asks Lee. "Don't know," Charlie confesses. "Good detective never ask what or why until after he see."

After *PARIS*, Oland went on (without Keye Luke, but with Thomas Beck) to make the rarely seen *CHARLIE CHAN IN EGYPT* (1935), a first-class entry. (*Photoplay*: "Grand atmosphere and unique settings plus hilarious comedy by Stepin Fetchit put this one way up in the Charlie Chan series. Oland is A-1.") In this one, Charlie is sent to Egypt to find out why treasures from an ancient tomb keep surfacing in private collections in Europe. The film offers the audience the chance to see Chan riding on (and falling off) a donkey ("Please remove offspring of Satan to some distant place!") and exploring an atmospheric Egyptian tomb. The film features an ingenious murder and a number of eerie scenes in the underground tomb of the high priest, Ameti. In a memorable line, Chan intones, "Theory like mist on eyeglasses, obscures fact."

"Beauty of poppy conceal sting of death," Charlie remarks cryptically in *CHARLIE CHAN IN SHANGHAI* (1935), but the prime suspect in this picture is not the Wicked Witch of the West. In *SHANGHAI*, Charlie and Lee help G-Men break up an opium ring. In one memorable scene, Charlie comes up with a deduction, seemingly out of thin air. "How do you do it, Pop? With mirrors?" Lee exclaims in bafflement. One of the best of the series, the film featured an early appearance by Charles Locher, who later won fame as Jon Hall.

Keye Luke unaccountably was gone again in *CHARLIE CHAN'S SECRET* (1936). This Chan was made shortly after the merger of Fox and the Twentieth-Century Company and it shows in improved production values. *SECRET* is widely regarded as one of the best and most beautifully filmed of the series, due in great part to the consummate direction of Gordon Wiles.

In *CHARLIE CHAN'S SECRET*, Charlie is asked to look into the disappearance of the sole heir to a large fortune and ends up spending the night in a rather spooky mansion in San Francisco. "Necessity mother of invention, but sometimes stepmother of deception," the detective remarks sagely. The film abounds with atmospheric, low lit scenes and seance sequences.

"Mind like parachute only function when open," Charlie Chan remarks in *CHARLIE CHAN AT THE CIRCUS* (1936). Both Warner Oland and Keye Luke, who was back for the duration of the Oland series, gave lively performances in this one, especially when confronted by a rampaging gorilla. During a visit by the Chan family to the circus, one of the show's owners is murdered. At the urging of his children, Charlie investigates, and ends up traveling aboard a train with the circus company while trying to identify the killer. An attempt is made on Charlie's life with a poisonous snake and his investigations take him into an interview with the show's midgets, played by real-life midgets George and Olive Brasno. (The circus train investigation, the escaped gorilla, and the sequence with the midgets were later to find their way into a rival studio's production: the 1939 Marx Brothers farce *AT THE CIRCUS*.)

Number One Son Lee has a comical romance with a high-wire walker and helps his dear ol' pop crack this colorful case. As a reward, Charlie receives lifetime passes for the entire family. Asked the number of passes he'll need, Charlie remarks, "Think fourteen quite sufficient." Then, glancing at son Lee and his girlfriend, he adds, "Maybe more later."

*CHARLIE CHAN AT THE RACE TRACK* (1936), like all the pictures since *CHARLIE CHAN'S COURAGE*, was an original story. However, in this case some incidents are almost certainly based on Arthur Conan Doyle's "Silver Blaze," with a touch thrown in of *CHARLIE CHAN CARRIES ON*. The mystery, centering on a prize racehorse, begins on a sea voyage and ends at the Santa Anita racetrack. Much skullduggery occurs, including the bludgeoning of a hapless horse trainer, the kidnapping of Charlie and Lee, and the disguising of horses to switch their identities. "Suspicion often father of truth," Charlie remarks sagely, as he begins to see the light.



In his Chan films, Warner Oland matched wits with both reigning kings of thirties horror. LEFT: *Bound for Honolulu* are the cast and crew of *THE BLACK CAMEL* (1931), including Warner Oland and his wife (on the right) and, seated front row center, Bela Lugosi. RIGHT: Oland met up with Boris Karloff in *CHARLIE CHAN AT THE OPERA* (1936), featuring Charlotte Henry and Thomas Beck as the romantic leads.

*CHARLIE CHAN AT THE RACETRACK* was an excellent entry, embodying all the elements of the archetypal Chan film. Again, there is a connection to a Marx Brothers comedy: *A DAY AT THE RACES* (1936), especially in its horse-switching finale, is said to have borrowed heavily from Charlie's equestrian adventure!

The last Chan opus of 1936 (released in December) was *CHARLIE CHAN AT THE OPERA*, a reworking of *THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA*. Warner Oland was matched with Boris Karloff, who turned up in the surprisingly straight supporting role of a deranged operatic baritone. The opera is an original written expressly for the film by Oscar Levant. During a performance, someone, dressed as Mephistopheles, murders two of the performers. The picture featured one of the last screen appearances of Charlotte Henry, who had made her mark in *ALICE IN WONDERLAND* (1933) and *MARCH OF THE WOODEN SOLDIERS* (1934). It was also the last stop on the Chan line for Thomas Beck, who went on to make two appearances with Mr. Moto. Said Beck in *Scarlet Street* #9:

"I don't know whether this should be publicized or not, but one of the reasons the studio kept me with Warner

Oland is that they discovered he enjoyed my company and talking with me, and didn't drink as much!"

Keye Luke got to show off his athletic prowess in *CHARLIE CHAN AT THE OLYMPICS* (1937). The plot concerns a new airplane navigating device stolen from Honolulu and brought to Berlin. Charlie Chan travels to Germany to see Lee compete in the Olympics (Number One Son wins a gold medal for swimming) and is soon involved in solving the mystery. The film, which used actual footage of the 1936 Berlin Olympics, was the most topical of the Chan movies.

In *CHARLIE CHAN ON BROADWAY* (1937) Charlie and Lee come to New York for a police banquet. In an attempt to clear his wrongly-accused offspring of a murder charge, the detective from Honolulu becomes involved with a hidden diary and several unexplained murders.

"New York English too baffling for humble detective," Charlie confesses when trying to deal with Brooklynese! Charlie clears up the mystery, but not before Lee ends up with a black eye. "Perhaps better to return to Honolulu,"

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Thomas Beck proved a handsome and reliable leading man in no less than four Charlie Chan mysteries and two Mr. Moto films. Here he is with Oland in one of the best: *CHARLIE CHAN IN EGYPT* (1935), also featuring Stepin Fetchit and Frank Conroy.



## THOMAS BECK ON CHARLIE CHAN AND MR. MOTO

Back in 1993, the late Thomas Beck (pictured with his sister) who appeared opposite Warner Oland (and sometimes Keye Luke) in *CHARLIE CHAN IN PARIS* (1935), *CHARLIE CHAN IN EGYPT*, *CHARLIE CHAN AT THE RACE TRACK*, and *CHARLIE CHAN AT THE OPERA* (the last three 1936), spoke with *Scarlet Street* from his Florida home about working in the popular mystery series. Like fellow leading man David Manners, Beck was one of Hollywood's many gay actors who ultimately abandoned his carefully monitored, closeted existence for a career out of the spotlight, his studio—20th Century Fox—putting its powerful publicity machine behind a new, bisexual player: Tyrone Power. The following comments are excerpted from *Scarlet Street* #9.

**Scarlet Street:** What was it like to work with Warner Oland?

**Thomas Beck:** Absolutely delightful, he was a good friend of mine and we enjoyed working together. His wife was a good friend, too. As a matter of fact, after he died, I got a letter from his wife. I had, meanwhile, left California and come back East. She wrote and asked if she could have my piano, which I had in storage. She said she'd pay the storage bill and let me have it back when I was ready for it. Finally, when I was moving to Connecticut

and knew I'd be there permanently, I got in touch to get the piano—and she said, "What piano?" (Laughs) And that was the end of that!

**SS:** In addition to the *Charlie Chan* films, you made two appearances with Mr. Moto, who was played by Peter Lorre.

**TB:** He was very nice! An amusing guy with a wry sense of humor.

**SS:** *CHARLIE CHAN IN PARIS* is the first film in which Keye Luke appeared as Charlie Chan's son Lee.

**TB:** That's right. He was a nice guy, very pleasant to work with and very clever.

**SS:** In *CHARLIE CHAN IN EGYPT*, one of your costars was black comic Stepin Fetchit.

**TB:** Great guy! I worked with several colored people out in Hollywood and they were all delightful. Stepin Fetchit was very funny.

**SS:** IN *EGYPT* is one of the best in the series. You had less to do in the films that followed.

**TB:** Well, you see, it was after *CHARLIE CHAN IN EGYPT* that Darryl Zanuck took over and made a lot of changes. I was get-

ting pretty good casting before Zanuck. At one time, I went to one of the general managers and complained and got no sympathy at all. I was bawled out for daring to make a complaint.

**SS:** The studios ran an actor's life.

**TB:** There was a very nice woman who used to do public relations for me, and one day, to my astonishment, I found out that Zanuck had fired her. I asked why, and somebody said, "Well, you must promise not to tell anyone. She told someone that Darryl Zanuck was having an affair with Tyrone Power."

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## WARNER OLAND

*Continued from page 46*

Charlie suggests and, pointing to Lee's shiner, adds, "Broadway evidently very bad on eyes."

By 1937, Warner Oland had come to be completely associated with the role of Charlie Chan. Unlike most actors, however, he was not bothered by his typecasting; he actually loved the part.

"You must understand that the man was—well, what we would call an aristocrat among actors," Keye Luke told Ken Hanke for *Charlie Chan at the Movies* (McFarland, 1989). "He had the grand style. He lectured at Harvard. He had his own Shakespearean group, I think. He was the first man to translate Strindberg into English. In all of his Chan pictures, the Chinese that he spoke he learned. No one had to speak it for him or dub it. He learned it. He and I used to practice Chinese calligraphy. He went to China—made periodical trips over there—and brought back little objects of art and all that sort of thing. So the man was a thoroughly dedicated artist. He came from the school that enabled you, taught you to cast aside your personality and create a character that the audience could believe in. That's what he did. Plus all the research and all the love for the Chan character that he put into it. That's why he was so good. And, as I say, he did learn all his own Chinese. I could hear him next door in his dressing room going over it by himself and I'd say, 'Well, there goes Pop—that's why he's so good.'"

*CHARLIE CHAN AT MONTE CARLO* (1937) was the 17th and last film that Warner Oland made in the celebrated series. In this outing, Charlie and son solve a series of gambling-related murders. Though far from the best of the Chans, *MONTE CARLO* was a passable and entertaining entry. Oland's health was beginning to fail by this time and it must certainly not have helped matters.

The final scenes of *CHARLIE CHAN IN MONTE CARLO* were an uncanny and unwitting farewell to the Oland films. Charlie and Lee Chan are seated in a dilapidated old taxi, being seen off by chief of police Joubert (Harold Huber, a veteran of four Chan mysteries), who assures them the taxi has "the new spark plug."

"It is with lead in the heart that I say au revoir, my good friend," Joubert mutters with inadvertent prescience. The taxi then rattles away, coughing and backfiring. It marked the last time audiences would ever see Warner Oland and Keye Luke together in a film.

In the fall of 1937, Oland's wife filed suit for divorce. Newspaper accounts of the time indicate that Oland's marriage was disintegrating due to his excessive drinking. (As pointed out by Thomas Beck, Oland was known to enjoy heavy socializing and drinking with fellow actors. As the years wore on, this took its toll on his marriage.) Initially, Mrs. Oland requested separate maintenance, which distressed her husband so much that, a short time later, Oland walked off the set of his latest Chan mystery, *CHARLIE CHAN AT THE RINGSIDE* (aka *CHARLIE CHAN AT THE FIGHTS*), and disappeared.

For a while, Oland's whereabouts were unknown and the subject of wide speculation. One newspaper even reported that, shortly after his disappearance, the actor was found wandering the streets of Los Angeles in a delirium. Actually, Oland was at his Beverly Hills home, where he normally stayed only when working on a movie. He was deeply troubled and drank more than usual.

The newspapers reported in January 1938 that worry over the court case had caused Oland to suffer a nervous breakdown. The ailing actor was, by this time, suspended

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## KEYE LUKE

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On April 25, 1942, Keye Luke married Ethel Davis, becoming stepfather to her two children by a previous marriage. Also that year, Keye landed an excellent, recurring role in MGM's Dr. Gillespie series, a continuation of the popular Dr. Kildare films that had starred Lew Ayres. With Ayres' departure from the Blair General Hospital staff, medical hopefuls Van Johnson, Richard Quine, and Keye Luke vied for the position of Lionel Barrymore's (Dr. Gillespie) new protégé.

Keye remembered Barrymore as "tart but lovable," and said that many of the young people at MGM would often come on the set of the Gillespie pictures to watch him work. Regarding his character in the series, Lee Wong Howe, Luke felt that it was fairly presented within the context of the five Gillespie films he made, and considering the era in which they were released—the war years of the mid forties—the liaison, even if competitive, between a Chinese and American interns rendered a highly favorable portrait of fraternity among divergent peoples.

"The first Gillespie picture began a contest between three boys to see which of them would win the chief physician's favor," explained the actor. "There were Van Johnson, myself, and Richard Quine. Of course, the rivalry was never resolved, because once you do that, the audience is no longer left guessing and the series is over. Van Johnson and I stayed in the series, but Dick Quine stepped out to become a director.

"While I did play a couple of villains during the war, I was kept from playing more of those roles because of my contract with MGM. Other studios would ask for my services, wanting to use me as a heavy. But MGM, not wanting to tarnish my appeal, came up with a response that went something like, 'We have him here for a very good series. We're happy with him. Therefore, no thank you.'"

One of the projects that Metro Goldwyn Mayer did loan Keye Luke out to do was the Universal serial, *ADVENTURES OF SMILIN' JACK* (1943), another of that company's comic strip adaptations, which starred Tom Brown as an adventurer concerned with counterintelligence attempts to obtain information about the plans and activities of Allied military movements. The supporting cast included Luke as Captain Wing (Jack's lieutenant), Rose Hobart as the evil Fraulein Von Teufel, and a host of other veteran screen favorites, including Jay Novello, Edgar Barrier, Turhan Bey—and Sidney Toler.

"I couldn't do the Charlie Chans with Toler," stated Keye, "since his negotiations with the studio over the Chan role were a protracted affair, and in the meantime, I went on to do other things. But during the filming of *ADVENTURES OF SMILIN' JACK*, we used to laugh about how close we had come to playing father and son . . .

"You know, even though serials were made primarily for younger audiences, the actors who worked in them took their assignments very seriously . . . you had to, since it was a very strenuous setup. We had 12 to 15 chapters per serial, and almost all of them were designed with some kind

of cliffhanger ending. The shooting schedules were very concentrated. We'd work on several chapters at a given time. Perhaps we'd jump from Chapter One to Chapter Six using one set, then from Five to Two using another set. And you had to have a pretty good assistant director or unit manager to keep all of these scenes straight, and keep everybody in the right costumes for the right shots . . . Whatever we thought of the material objectively, as actors, we tried to make it as real and sincere as possible. Being professionals, we realized that we were working for an audience, and consequently, strove to hold their attention, and not play false with them."

In 1945, as the real war was beginning to wind down, serial heroes onscreen were still heavily engaged in battling foreign agents tooth and nail. Attended by Keye Luke (wearing a moustache), a young Lloyd Bridges did everything he could to make the second version of *SECRET AGENT X-9* as exciting as an earlier, 1937, one had been. And most serial fans think he succeeded.

Morgan Cox was the producer on *SECRET AGENT X-9*,

recalled Keye, "and once he said to me about Lloyd, 'Keep your eye on that boy, because he is going to go somewhere in this business.' He certainly was right . . . Speaking of Morgan Cox, I remember one day our unit came back from lunch early, which was unusual in itself since we were either on the nose or just a little over. And we were sitting around, when Morgan came up and said, 'I see you're all back. Why aren't we shooting?' We explained about how the carpenters needed to fix one of the doors on the set—hang some venetian blinds or something—and that they wouldn't be arriving till such and such an hour. 'Well,' he yelled, 'get me a hammer!' And with tool in hand, he went right to work, banging nails and hanging shades. After he was done, he announced, 'I can do this because I'm the producer and don't have to carry a union card . . . Now, then, let's proceed!'"

Luke couldn't say for sure how many weeks he spent on each of the serials he made, but did remember that everything moved extremely fast. Another thing that slipped his memory

was working with Russell Hayden on *LOST CITY OF THE JUNGLE* (1946), which may be partly attributable to the fact that Universal padded this production with large quantities of previously shot footage from the feature *WHITE SAVAGE* (1943), starring Maria Montez. Russell Hayden and Keye Luke were dressed to match shots of *WHITE SAVAGE* cast members Jon Hall and Turhan Bey, sharply reducing costs by minimizing the shooting schedule.

*ADVENTURES OF SMILIN' JACK*, *SECRET AGENT X-9*, and *LOST CITY OF THE JUNGLE* all were directed by the team of Ray Taylor and Lewis D. Collins, an enterprising pair who were well acquainted with serial filmmaking procedure. Sometimes they alternated, each man directing on a different day. Other times, they doubled up: one director per group of actors per stage. Keye said that shooting was often so tight that one unit would be finishing up as another was coming in. Still, overall, he considered the process to have been a clever arrangement, allowing for the greatest output of product without getting sloppy.



During the fifties, Keye Luke provided voices for the American versions of such Japanese films as *GIGANTIS, THE FIRE MONSTER* (1959).

In the late forties, Keye Luke went back to playing Charlie Chan's son, this time in two rather inferior installments for Monogram called *THE FEATHERED SERPENT* (1948) and *SKY DRAGON* (1949). New Englander Roland Winters had succeeded Warner Oland and Sidney Toler as the Chinese detective, appearing in six films. (These two were the last.)

"Roland's father, Felix Winternitz, was first violinist and concert master of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, and Roland shared his father's love of music," disclosed Keye. "Roland started his career on radio on what was then the Blue network, broadcasting Boston Braves baseball games . . . When he and I worked together, we got along fine. We finished the Charlie Chans with *SKY DRAGON*. I remember filming at Monogram around Christmas time, and we were the only company left working on the lot. Monogram was a poverty row studio whose days were numbered, but we were happy to have a job. We didn't care about the holidays; we considered it a bonus just to be working. Actually, there were plans to make three more Chans later. A firm in England had some 'frozen money' they were willing to use to finance the pictures. We were going to do the interiors in London and then travel to Rome, Paris, and Monte Carlo and shoot locations for the three mysteries. I was in New York in March 1950, waiting to go over, when I received a telegram stating: 'His Majesty's government has just devalued the pound. So sorry, no more Charlie Chan stories.' Hence, after 47 films, the series finally came to an end."

In addition to Keye Luke's many minor films (budget wise), he excelled in supporting roles in major productions that included *OIL FOR THE LAMPS OF CHINA* (1935), *THE GOOD EARTH* (1937), *DRAGON SEED* (1944), and *LOVE IS A MANY SPLENDORED THING* (1955). Beyond that, he appeared on Broadway (commencing December 1, 1958) as Father Wong in the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical, *FLOWER DRUM SONG*, it ran three years, 601 performances.

While Luke's feature film career began to wane in the fifties, his television credits skyrocketed. From 1952 to the late 1980s, he worked on nearly 100 separate network productions, such as *GUNSMOKE*, *PERRY MASON*, *MARCUS WELBY M.D.*, *STAR TREK*, *CANNON*, *CHARLIE'S ANGELS*, *RIFLEMAN*, *STEELE*, *FALCON CREST*, *MacGYVER*, *NIGHT COURT*, and *THE JUDGE*. He was a regular cast member on the short-lived *ANNA AND THE KING* TV series (1972), starring (who else but?) Yul Brynner, who recreated his Broadway and film characterization of the King of Siam. Keye played Kralahame, the King's official aide.

On rare occasions, an actor will play a role so special that it gives renewed meaning to his private beliefs. Keye said that he had just such a thing happen to him, acting as Master Po, the blind monk of *KUNG FU* (1971), a TV movie that served as the pilot for the later television series starring David Carradine.

"I think that part was one of the most marvelous opportunities I have ever had," related Keye, "To be given all those eloquent things to say . . . they came right out of Chinese philosophy. I had, of course, read some of them earlier

in my life, but many I was not familiar with. It took me back to an old habit and reintroduced me to the basic elements of spiritual wisdom."

Without having to audition or take a screen test, Keye got the part of Po from Jerry Thorpe, with whom the actor had worked on the network series *DECEMBER BRIDE*. Keye seemed so perfectly suited to play a great mystical sage (though his still-youthful face had to be considerably aged with heavy makeup) that he was hired on the spot. The program lasted three years and brought Luke a whole new generation of fans.

Typcasting may worry a lot of actors, but to Keye Luke it brought an intimacy with the public and a sort of immortality that he relished. When Charlie Chan was made into a cartoon character for a Saturday morning series entitled *THE AMAZING CHAN AND THE CHAN CLAN* (1972-74), Keye was asked to provide the voice for the master detective. It was both ironic and fitting that his long association with that figure be allowed to continue yet farther



Late in life, Keye Luke found a new audience as the wise Keeper of the Mogwai in *GREMLINS* (1984) and *GREMLINS II* (1990).

In that same vein, Luke used his voice to record selections from Shakespeare, Keats, and Coleridge, as well as excerpts from some art histories. He often lectured on Oriental art and, besides continuing his art studies, took singing lessons to strengthen his larynx, so that he could perform more easily in a number of summer theater productions.

Prior to our last conversation, Keye Luke had spent six weeks in New York, working on a new Woody Allen movie, then untitled, which came to be called *ALICE* (1990). The resilient 86-year-old played a feisty herbalist who helps a repressed Alice (played by Allen's then-companion Mia Farrow). Immediately before that, he had done a *SUPERBOY* television episode, a feature film with Denzel Washington, *THE MIGHTY QUINN*, and a sequel to *GREMLINS*.

For years, Keye Luke lived in a large, vivid pink house in Laurel Canyon (northeast of Beverly Hills); however, toward the end of his life, he became a resident of Whittier, California, where his daughter, Ethel Longenecker, had a home. (Luke's wife had died in

1979.) Mrs. Longenecker was by her father's side when he died at Presbyterian Intercommunity Hospital, on January 12, 1991, following a stroke.

"I have been very lucky over the years," Keye once said. "Sure, parts like Number One Son and the serial side-kicks I played had a kind of menial side to them. But I think I was able to see beyond that. I knew that, with the historical changes going on in the world, changes in entertainment would occur, too. Writers would see the new things happening and write them down. Today, if they were to write a contemporary story with Chinese characters, or come up with a new Kato or Ah Fong [from *SECRET AGENT X-9*], I'm sure the actors' role would be better defined than they were in my day. As far as I am concerned, I'm happy with what Hollywood gave me. I feel they were very generous."





# Record Rack

by Ross Care

## The Fox Renascent

Though the musical output of the late Golden Age was incredibly profuse and varied, three studios stood out even amidst the musical bounty of fifties Hollywood: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, Warner Bros., and 20th Century Fox. Amazingly, the musical climates of these lavish Meccas of art and commerce, and the individual studio "sounds" themselves, were often controlled by a single creative power who sometimes ruled the individual music departments for decades. In the fifties, these included Johnny Green at MGM, Ray Heindorf at Warners, and Alfred Newman at Fox (two out of these, Green and Newman, also having established themselves as successful composers and influential conductor/musical directors on the rich studio music scene). But even among this profligate array of talent, it was (and remains) conceded that Alfred Newman at 20th developed the most polished and distinctive orchestral sound of all the Hollywood studios.

Newman officially became musical director for Fox in 1940, after a successful career in New York theater that began when he was 17, and nearly a decade of freelance Hollywood work throughout the thirties. (This included musical direction on several Fox and MGM musicals, among them *METROPOLITAN* with opera singer Lawrence Tibbett, the first release after 20th Century merged with Fox in 1935.)

Newman, who once stated that he loved best the camaraderie of conducting, and was not primarily interested in the "lonely" career of a composer, nonetheless evolved this most prestigious of major studio sounds over his own long compositional career, which stretched from 1930, when Newman was brought to Hollywood by Irving Berlin to work on *REACHING FOR THE MOON*, to the eventual fragmentation and demise of the studio system in the sixties. (Newman's last film score was for Universal's *AIRPORT* in 1970; he died in February of that same year.)

Fox's "Newman sound" (as particularly defined by its luminous and often lushly spiritual emphasis on strings) first effectively manifested itself with *SONG OF BERNADETTE* (1943), crystallized

with *CAPTAIN FROM CASTILE* (1947), and peaked with mid-fifties scores such as *THE ROBE* (1953), *THE EGYPTIAN* (1954, in collaboration with Bernard Herrmann), and his last score for 20th, an ineffably poignant *THE DIARY OF ANNE FRANK* (1959).

Newman's reign at 20th also made the studio a haven for composers ranging

irascibility had begun to negatively influence his career in mainstream Hollywood in the fifties, but who had nonetheless scored a number of classics for Fox, ranging from *ANNA AND THE KING OF SIAM* (1944) through *THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL* (1951).

Thus Newman's employment of some of the best and most original composers

available directly engendered some of the Golden Age's greatest scores. This development flowered with Fox's late-period musical renaissance, which was sparked by the CinemaScope craze that, for a time, lured patrons away from their newly acquired television sets and back into the languishing movie theaters of the mid fifties.

Though Fox is not particularly renowned for its genre output, among the memorable CinemaScope films of the period were *THE FLY* (1958), scored by Paul Sawtell and Bert Shefter, *THE ALLIGATOR PEOPLE* (1959), scored by Irving Gertz, and *JOURNEY TO THE CENTER OF THE EARTH* (1959), scored by Herrmann. Indeed the brothers Newman (including Lionel, an important Fox conductor and sometime composer, and to a lesser degree, Emil), were a dynasty which collectively might be described as the musical Romanovs of Hollywood. Their influence continues to this day in the sundry work of Newman's nephew Randy, and sons Thomas and David, the last appropriately providing the orchestral underscore for the recent Don Bluth animated film of *ANASTASIA*, loosely based on the Ingrid Bergman film originally scored by Alfred.

Among the newcomers whom the astute Newman promoted was the young Jerry Goldsmith. *RECORD RACK* presented an overview of Goldsmith's work in our review of his legendary *CHINATOWN* in *Scarlet Street* #24. That article noted Goldsmith's apprenticeship in both radio and television music, and also his varied and innovative contributions to genre film scoring. Appropriately, the long anticipated (and long delayed) continuation of the Fox Classics series of restored original soundtracks that commenced on Fox's own CD label several years back, has resumed on Varese Sarabande with a series of four releases



THE OTHER (1972)

from David Raksin, who composed *LAURA* there in 1944, to Leigh Harline, Paul Sawtell, and Irving Gertz. During the wide-screen era of the mid-fifties, Newman continued this policy of employing a liberal variety of promising newcomers and seasoned veterans. Among the latter were (the currently, curiously neglected) Hugo Friedhofer, who masterfully scored one of Fox's (and Hollywood's) most progressive Westerns, *BROKEN ARROW* (1950), and turned in brilliant scores for the studio's wide-screen *THE RAINS OF RANCHIPUR* (1955) and *BOY ON A DOLPHIN* (1957); Alex North, who initially worked for Fox on *VIVA ZAPATA* (1952), just around the time of his groundbreaking *A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE* score; and Herrmann himself, whose legendary



emphasizing the contributions of two masters of vintage and contemporary genre scoring: Goldsmith's *PLANET OF THE APES* and *MEPHISTO WALTZ/THE OTHER*, and Herrmann's *THE GHOST AND MRS. MUIR* and the long-promised *JOURNEY TO THE CENTER OF THE EARTH*. That Goldsmith and Herrmann remain two of the most popular and best-selling favorites among the small but fanatical (and growing) band of contemporary film music buffs (and CD buyers) undoubtedly influenced these choices as well.

While all of the above releases are of interest to soundtrack and genre buffs alike, the "double feature" disk of Goldsmith's *THE MEPHISTO WALTZ* and *THE OTHER* seems the most fresh and fascinating of the four. Besides such mainstream choices as *JOURNEY* and *PLANET OF THE APES*, the Goldsmith pairing provides music from two unusual films that have been relatively neglected by film history. (Many admirers of *THE OTHER* have noted that they have not seen the film since its original release, and many fans of the *cine fantastique*, including this writer, have never seen *THE MEPHISTO WALTZ* at all.) Thus this disk emerges as one of the more original releases in the somewhat predictable world of recent film music reissues, and producers Nick Redman and Bruce Kimmell are to be credited for including it among the more familiar offerings.

#### Satanism and Evil Twins

The *MEPHISTO* disk might justifiably be subtitled "The Astounding Musical and Imaginative Versatility of the Amazing Jerry Goldsmith." In my *CHINATOWN* review, I noted Goldsmith's virtuosic versatility and his chameleon-like ability to absorb, digest, and fuse an as-

tonishing spectrum of musical influences. At times, Goldsmith interjects a simple, naive lyricism into astonishingly complex and, in some cases, intimidating compositional techniques and textures derived from contemporary concert music. All of this (as exemplified by *MEPHISTO WALTZ*) is sheathed in an adventurous totality created from the various experimental/technological techniques available to the well-versed contemporary composer/sound designer. Goldsmith is also among the last of the Golden Age composers to utilize and extend the Fox "Newman sound," notably in the intense string-drenched passages of scores such as *JUSTINE* (1969) and *CHINATOWN* (1974).

*THE MEPHISTO WALTZ* is based on a novel by Fred Mustard Stewart about Satanism, possession, and classical music. The title of both film and novel is taken from the famous orchestra tone poem by Franz Liszt. The score is a postmodern fusion of fragments of the Liszt composition (notably the piece's introductory measures with their distinctive open and augmented 5ths), Goldsmith's own abrasively modern scoring, and the melody of the *Dies Irae* or "Day of Wrath," an ancient motif from the Latin requiem text (a theme beloved of fatalistic romantic composers from Berlioz to Rachmaninoff).

Goldsmith's score employs mainly strings, with solo piano and violin to suggest the plot's musical elements, a few judiciously employed reeds and brass, and an eerie complement of electronically manipulated instrumental and musique concrete effects—but it is his amazingly varied use of string timbre and effects that ultimately dominate the score. In a way, *MEPHISTO* echoes Herrmann's use of strings in *PSYCHO* (1960), but while Herrmann

created a similarly kaleidoscopic spectrum through the deployment of exclusively string sounds, he seldom ventured beyond the tonal and harmonic range pioneered by one of the giants of mid-century modern music, Bela Bartok, circa the forties. While a study of Goldsmith's early/middle period scores reveals a profound admiration for the evocatively cinematic music of Bartok as well, in *MEPHISTO* Goldsmith takes his string writing beyond the Hungarian master's innovative techniques and emphatically into the late 20th century, notably by absorbing the mode of eastern European modernists such as Lygeti and Penderecki, noted for their harmonic fragmentation and pointillist use of both tonality and color. The breathless atonal twitterings and eerie insect drones evident through much of *MEPHISTO* are particularly influenced by the challenging orchestral music of Penderecki, and works such as his keenly "Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima": the eerily brittle *col legno* effects, achieved by playing the strings with the top (or wooden) part of the bow, woozy *gussandi* (a favorite effect of Bartok's string writing), and various complex harmonic innovations that destroy any sense of grounded tonality and make this mode ideal for evoking the strange, the fantastic, and, in this case, the Satanic.

In addition, Goldsmith employs an assortment of subtle musique concrete sounds: i.e., real sounds—human sighs and groans, as well as instrumental sounds electronically manipulated (played backwards in some cases) and used as "sweeteners" or overdubs in the final recording process. In a Canadian documentary, Goldsmith reported that the *MEPHISTO* score was originally recorded in six tracks, several reserved for

James Mason, Arlene Dahl, Pat Boone, and Peter Ronson take refuge in an Atlantean altar stone when a dinosaur attacks during a volcanic eruption. It's all part of a *JOURNEY TO THE CENTER OF THE EARTH* (1959).



© 1959 20th Century Fox

the atmospheric and diabolically frightening taped effects (Various devotees of this score have noted that some of these special effects, including the solo piano tracks, as rendered on this new Varese Sarabande release, vary from a recent bootleg copy, and also from the movie soundtrack itself, speculations this writer has not had the time or means to explore).

As in *CHINATOWN*, the Goldsmith of this period also often tempers the more challenging sections of his scores with an accessible sense of lyricism. Aside from the use of melodic fragments from Liszt and the *Dies Irae*, however, there is little conventional lyricism within this score, nor apparently is much called for within the Satanic machinations of the plot. *MEPHISTO WALTZ* is a fascinating sonic adventure, and a prime example of Goldsmith's key experimental period, but it is not easy or casual listening, and indeed may put off younger listeners weaned on and conditioned by the

orchestrally generic and conservatively tonal mode of most current film score composition, a persistently retrogressive trend instigated by the John Williams *STAR WARS* scores of the seventies. But for those willing to explore Goldsmith's innovations, *MEPHISTO WALTZ* is a remarkable excursion into the kind of intelligent, gritty, vividly atmospheric film music that is simply not being composed anymore.

Effectively countering *MEPHISTO WALTZ* on the same CD is *THE OTHER*, Goldsmith's lyrical score for the film of Tom Tryon's novel about twin boys, one good and one darkly malevolent, set in rural America, circa 1935. In vivid contrast to *MEPHISTO*, *THE OTHER* is in Goldsmith's lyrical Americana mode, but darkened here with appropriate touches of subtle malevolence and unease to underline Tryon's Bradburyesque tale of dark shadows in the Connecticut sunlight.

Goldsmith's recent rerecordings of *A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE* (1951) and *WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF* (1966) demonstrate his admiration (indeed, veneration) for one of the greatest of his fellow Hollywood composers, Alex North.

In the early fifties, North was also pioneering a radical yet accessible new sound in Hollywood scoring. Like Goldsmith after him, he could brilliantly set gems of poignant lyricism within complex harmonic and textural settings.

While never directly imitating North's style, Goldsmith has obviously absorbed and expanded upon his colleague's cinematic techniques. A North sound is subtly discernible in many of the cues contained in the unbroken (and untitled as far as individual cues go) suite from *THE OTHER*, notably in the use of certain muted string lines with a very Northian cast, and in a cue about 18 minutes into the suite that echoes and elaborates North's celebrated "Flowers For The Dead" cue from *STREETCAR*. In addition, this new recording offers cues deleted from the film's final print

The second Goldsmith disk in this new series is the first complete and original soundtrack to *PLANET OF THE APES* (1968). Suffice it to say here that, if James Cameron does indeed remake this classic, we can hope it might be at Fox so he can recycle Goldsmith's score as well. One of Goldsmith's most classic fusions of the modern and primitive, the score cries out for the high tech realization of the Pierre Boulle novel that would be possible with today's special effects (assuming that a new version can measure up to Goldsmith's definitively evocative original.) Another Goldsmith double feature disk, the 16 tracks from *PLANET OF THE APES* (which include much previously unreleased material) are followed by a continuous 16.27 suite from the 1971 sequel, *ESCAPE FROM THE PLANET OF THE APES*.

#### Ghosts and Dinosaurs

Bernard Herrmann worked consistently if somewhat intermittently at 20th Century Fox between 1943 (when his association with Orson Welles led to his work there on *JANE EYRE*) and 1962 (and a sorry waste of his talent on a fitfully fascinating, if otherwise undistinguished adaptation of F. Scott Fitzgerald's *TENDER IS THE NIGHT*). Herrmann's Fox oeuvre includes both well known scores, including such genuine classics as *THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL* (now a collector's item among the first batch of Fox CD releases), and lesser-known efforts on such films as Joe Mankiewicz's fact-based modern espionage thriller, *FIVE FINGERS* (1952), and the virtually vanished 'Scope adventure yarn, *KING OF THE KHYBER RIFLES* (1953). During Fox's mid fifties CinemaScope era, Herrmann produced some of his least remembered compositions, among them scores for *GARDEN OF EVIL* and an Edwin Booth biofilm, *PRINCE OF PLAYERS* (both 1954), the latter one of Herrmann's more rousing energetic and theatrical scores.

In 1959, the same year he scored both Hitchcock's *NORTH BY NORTHWEST* at MGM and Fox's *BLUE DENIM* (one of the composer's rare forays, along with *A HATFUL OF RAIN*, into scoring Broadway theater adaptations), Herrmann also scored his first Jules Verne property, Fox's *JOURNEY TO THE CENTER OF THE EARTH*. A film neither terribly good nor terribly bad, and certainly not lacking in a certain innocent charm, *JOURNEY* ultimately seems a Harryhausen movie without Ray Harryhausen. While the wholesomely sexy cast, headed by Disney's Captain Nemo himself, James Mason, and including Pat Boone (as a young Scotsman!), Arlene Dahl, and Diane Baker, (not to mention Peter Ronson as a hunky blond Iclander with a touching attachment to a personable—if ill-fated—duck named Gertrude), do their best with the modestly effective, if somewhat illogical screenplay, the wonderful jolts of energy and excitement which Harryhausen's legendary efforts bring to his similarly plot-





**PREVIOUS PAGE:** Gene Tierney plays peek-a-boo with the spirit of a dead sea captain in *THE GHOST AND MRS. MUIR* (1947). **LEFT:** Barbara Parkins does her best to discourage Alan Alda's Cyrano de Bergerac impression in *THE MEPHISTO WALTZ* (1971). **RIGHT:** Charlton Heston takes a break from filming *PLANET OF THE APES* (1968) to meet with members of the National Rifle Association.

ted (and sometimes equally mundane) projects are sorely in absentia here, replaced instead by several sparsely cosmeticized pet shop lizards (a species more distasteful than terrifying, and obviously related to those who would be seen the following year terrorizing Jill St. John, she of the hot pink Capri pants, in Fox's even tackier Irwin Allen opus, *THE LOST WORLD*) and several obviously soundstage "bowels of the earth" settings.

To a certain degree, Herrmann's score for *JOURNEY* reflects the "can't get started" pace of the film itself. Scored primarily for ponderously heavy brass and low woodwinds and augmented by organs, harps, and percussion, the score, though highly effective in the film itself, somewhat suggests on CD a Herrmann pastiche, often more than a tad monotonous, and bringing to mind far more listenable moments from other scores, notably the spare triadic harmonies exploited in *DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL* and the harp effects from 1953's *BENEATH THE TWELVE MILE REEF* (which effectively and sensually plunges the listener into the depths of the ocean rather than the earth). A good deal of the *JOURNEY* score is based on a droning progression of Herrmann's always effective but by now familiar triads, often just two in this case, the primary interest of which lies in the composer's always fascinating orchestral permutations on such spare and rather static material. Highlights include the "Main Title" with its wailing electronic organs and glowering trombones,

which seem especially emphasized in this new stereo remastering, and the main set piece in the score, the Wagnerian "Sunrise" followed by the fantastical descending harp passages as Mason's team descends into the subterranean passageway of the Icelandic volcano's crater.

Herrmann's droning mode continues pretty much throughout the entire score, extending even into his patented "creature" cues, notably for the "Giant Chameleon" track featuring Herrmann's introduction of the serpent, an ancient (ili) wind instrument that Spike Jones would have loved. Ethereal vibraphone passages, quite similar in sound to the deleted "Space Diamonds" cue from *DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL*, add a welcome touch of lightness to the cumbersome goings on, and one of the final cues, "The Lost City/Atlantis," is scored solely for vibes and organ, a simple and haunting track (one of the few in *JOURNEY* where you feel that Herrmann was actually inspired to push his imaginative envelope). Three innocuous tunes (two deleted from the film) written by Jimmy van Heusen and Sammy Cahn for Pat Boone, are also included, as well as the vocal/accordion march heard as the expedition first starts down the underground passageway, certainly the jauntiest cue on the entire CD.

Obviously both the film of *JOURNEY TO THE CENTER OF THE EARTH* and Herrmann himself would have profited by Harryhausen's input, given that Bernie concocted a much more powerful ambience for the Columbia/Harryhausen

Verne adaptation, *MYSTERIOUS ISLAND*, in 1961 (recently and beautifully reissued in stereo on the recent Silva Screen CD of the nearly complete score). Though the film of *JOURNEY* concludes with the odd effect of an *a capella* student chorus underscoring the "End Title," the CD also provides the deleted instrumental finale.

The second Herrmann disk in the new Fox series is the complete score to *THE GHOST AND MRS. MUIR*. Though the profuse array of brief cues, 33 in all, makes for somewhat fragmented listening, the score remains one of Herrmann's most beautiful, a haunting fusion of mystical sea music laced with a sense of romantic yearning that pre-echoes the similar mood of longing and *liebestod* that would so consummately be evoked by Herrmann's music for *VERTIGO* over a decade later.

Fine as these first two batches of strikes from the rich musical lode of the 20th Century Fox musical archives are, there is much more wealth to be mined there, and I certainly wish and hope for continued success with Kimmel, Redman, and Company's welcome exploration of one of the richest of Hollywood's musical gold mines. Long live 20th Century Fox!



Ross Carr recently completed two articles for a new book, *Performing Arts: Motion Pictures*, an anthology of essays from the Library of Congress in Washington, and due out sometime this year.

## Next in Scarlet Street: Robert Wise!



# Saints and Sinners



## The Films of Robert S. Baker and Monty Berman

by Tom Johnson

Britain's Hammer Films is generally—and rightly—given credit for the revival of the horror movie in the mid-fifties. This bloody, pre-Beatles British Invasion began with *THE QUATERMASS EXPERIMENT* (*THE CREEPING UNKNOWN*, USA/1955), and scaled greater heights with *THE CURSE OF FRANKENSTEIN* (1957) and *DRACULA* (*HORROR OF DRACULA*, 1958). Hammer served notice to other British producers that there was gold to be mined in America, with horror as the pickaxe.

Following in Hammer's wake were, among others, Robert S. Baker and Monty Berman. What makes this pair unique was their sharing the duties of producing, directing, and cinematography... along with their frequently offbeat choice of subject matter.

Nestor Montague Berman was born in London in 1912; Robert Sidney Baker debuted four years later. Berman entered the film industry in 1930 as a camera assistant at Twickenham, and Baker became an assistant director in 1937. Both men served with the Eighth Army during World War II, with Baker spending some time in a film unit.

Along with Berman's father, Morris, and Richard Leeson, the four formed Tempean Films, which was incorporated on February 2, 1948. Their first production was *DATE WITH A DREAM* (1948), followed by *MELODY CLUB* (1949)—hardly a portent of the screen horror to follow.

In 1952, Tempean received financial backing from the Bank of America. Two years later, the National Provincial Bank and the National Film Corporation joined in, and Tempean secured a distribution deal with Eros. By 1957, Tempean had produced a handful of films, none of which created much of a stir. The release of Hammer's *THE CURSE OF FRANKENSTEIN* on May 2 apparently kick-started the boys into action. One month later, *FRANKENSTEIN*'s screenwriter was brought into the mix.

Taking a page from Hammer's considerable book on success, Baker and Berman followed the example of *THE QUATERMASS EXPERIMENT*, which had begun life as a BBC serial (written by Nigel Kneale). Jimmy Sangster came on board to adapt a Peter Keys' serial for the screen. The result was *THE TROLLENBERG TERROR*, which, like *EXPERIMENT*, acquired an ambulatory title in its journey to the States and emerged as *THE CRAWLING EYE* (1958). As one would imagine, cutting a lengthy serial to an 84-minute picture created some lapses in logic, but not many; this was a pretty good movie.

A small Swiss village facing the towering peak of the Trollenberg is under siege by aliens—really grotesque

aliens—concealed by a radioactive cloud. Trapped in this dilemma are Alan Brooks (Forrest Tucker), scholarly but rugged; Sarah Pilgrim (Jennifer Jayne); her telepathic sister, Anne (Janet Munro); and a host of typical types usually found in these sci-fi situations. The aliens, who require cold for survival, are ultimately dispatched by fire.

As with the Quatermass pictures, there's an eerie mix of science fiction and horror (a decapitation, for example) and an unsettling atmosphere that almost isn't let down

by the mostly miserable special effects. Director Quentin Lawrence was forced to overcome the picture's tiny budget with sheer imagi-



nation and proved to be well up to the job. Sangster's nicely pared script hit all the highlights hard: Anne's weird, telepathic trance . . . an alien takeover of a human body . . . a claustrophobia-inducing alien attack inside a small cabin . . . and, best of all, a huge-eyed, tentacled horror bursting through a doorway.

While not among the best sci fi/horror movies of the late fifties—the low budget saw to that—**THE TROLLENBERG TERROR** held its own. "Most of the movie took place up a mountain in Switzerland," recalls Jimmy Sangster, "and I didn't go on location. Come to think about it, I don't think anybody else did, either. They probably shot their locations in a gravel pit painted white."

**THE TROLLENBERG TERROR** was trade shown at the Hammer Theatre (Hammer rented out the screening room at its Wardour Street offices) on October 3, 1958 and premiered at the Leicester Square Ritz on October 23, paired with Richard Gordon's **FIEND WITHOUT A FACE**. General release on the ABC circuit came on December 8, **TROLLENBERG** forming a double feature with, of all things, **CALL GIRLS!** *The Kinematograph Weekly* (October 9) said of **TROLLENBERG**: "Plot extravagant, but types realistic. Eerie highlights spectacular . . . skillfully developed . . . suspenseful story, sound acting." *Variety* (November 15) concurred. "Well-made and gripping thriller. Jimmy Sangster's taut screenplay extracts the most from the situation. A chilling air of plausibility." (The *Variety* review was especially kind, since the picture had by then been rechristened **THE CRAWLING EYE**. Pictures with titles like that need all the help they can get!)

**BLOOD OF THE VAMPIRE** (written by Jimmy **FRANKENSTEIN** Sangster, as proclaimed by the posters) capitalized on **THE CURSE OF FRANKENSTEIN**, much as **TROLLENBERG** had on **QUATERMASS**. The picture was filmed between October 21 and November 15, 1957, at Twickenham. By this time, **FRANKENSTEIN** was ringing cash registers all over the world, Baker and Berman must have known they had a hit on their hands.

Dr. John Pierre (Vincent Ball) is unjustly sentenced to an asylum run by Dr. Callistratus (Donald Wolfitt), a semi-vampire kept alive by blood transfusions, who, aided by Carl (Victor Maddern), his loathsome, hunchbacked assistant, performs grotesque experiments on the inmates. Pierre's medical knowledge gains him special privileges as Callistratus' new assistant, but his morals—and stomach—rebel when he learns the full extent of the madman's bloody work. Madeline (Barbara Shelley), Pierre's fiancée, insinuates herself into the asylum as a housekeeper, hoping to free her beloved, but ends up on the wrong end of Callistratus' scalpel; luckily Carl, following the age-old tradition of hunchbacks and heroines, has taken a liking to her. Callistratus dies the death he deserves: torn to shreds (like Count Zaroff in **THE MOST DANGEROUS GAME**) by his own savage hounds.

Donald Wolfitt's performance is way over the top (the actor is made up to look like Bela Lugosi's bloated brother), but he managed a knighthood, despite being over the top

in most of his performances. Christopher Lee, who was on the set as an observer, appeared in support of Sir Donald in **THE TRAITOR** (1957). "He was certainly a larger than life character," Lee recalls, "both in and out of character. We were all a bit afraid of him—he had quite a reputation as a Shakespearean, you know—but he was all bluster—very kind to the younger actors. Supposedly, Albert Finney's character in **THE DRESSER** was based on him. He was the last of the actor/managers, I suppose . . . there won't be another like him."

It's fortunate that Wolfitt devoured the scenery on **BLOOD OF THE VAMPIRE**, because the rest of the cast isn't up to it. Vincent Ball (identified on the original release posters as Vincent Price!) is, well, ineffectual. Barbara Shelley, so capable in such later horrors as **VILLAGE OF THE DAMNED** (1960), **THE GORGON** (1964), and **DRACULA—PRINCE OF DARKNESS** (1966), is here given far too little to do, and Victor Maddern—you have to see him to believe him! The film's color is incredibly garish, the sets are a bit tacky, the blood flows too freely—but somehow, it works. It's not Hammer, mind you, but it's not bad, either.

As with several Baker/Berman pictures, scenes were shot for Continental release only. In this case, Callistratus' original housekeeper (not even seen in British prints) is murdered, after revealing a substantial amount of cleavage, amidst bloody entrails aplenty. Director Henry Cass, possibly due to this picture, eventually joined the Moral Rearmament Movement.

**BLOOD OF THE VAMPIRE** premiered at the London Pavilion on August 8, 1958, and was trade shown four days later. A general release on the ABC circuit followed on March 2, 1959. Critics were respectfully appalled . . . *Kinematograph Weekly* (August 14): "Put across with great aplomb . . . tosses in everything from near rape to body

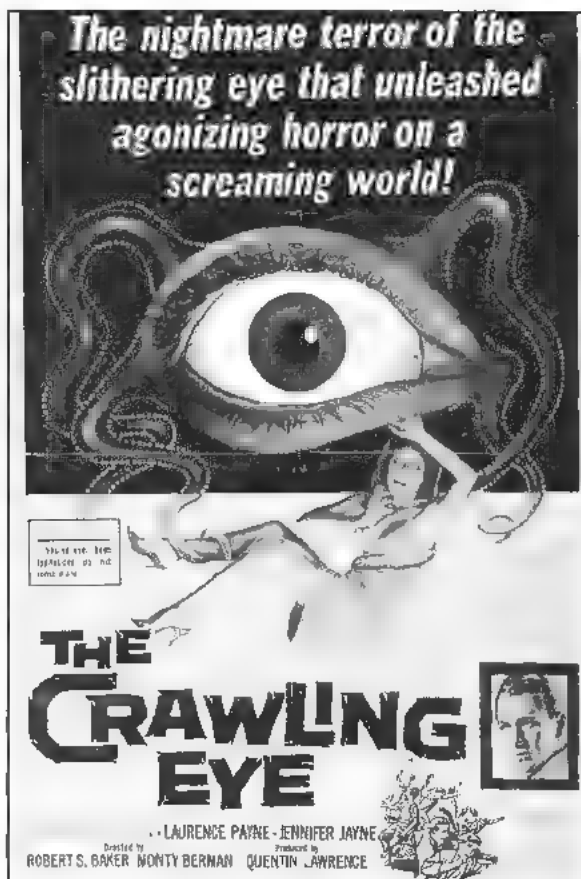
snatching . . . it's got the lot!"; *Variety* (September 3): "Can be expected to clean up in indiscriminating theaters . . . not much directing, acting, or dialog . . ."

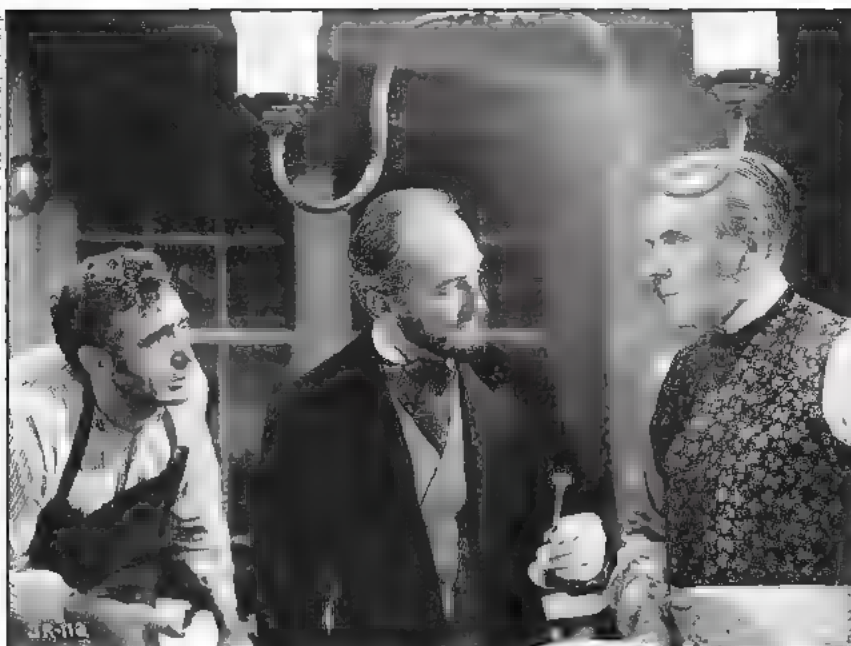
"It's easy to make horror films cheap and nasty," Baker told the trades, "but you've still got to have a good story." That pretty much sums up **BLOOD OF THE VAMPIRE**.

Of all the mass murderers in history, it is Jack the Ripper—despite "only" five official victims—who remains the most infamous of the lot, for several reasons. For one, he was never caught. For another, he didn't just kill, did he? There are at least a dozen well considered and researched theories as to his identity and motives, but the attraction is that we'll simply never know.

Filmed at Shepperton in November 1958, the Baker/Berman **JACK THE RIPPER** isn't the best take on the subject (for that see **THE LODGER**, 1944), but it's a good, solid effort. Rather than focus on one suspect as was done in previous films, **JACK THE RIPPER** introduces a plethora of possibilities, and Jimmy Sangster's script moves like lightning through the London fog.

Sam Lowry (Lee Patterson), a New York detective, visits his London counterpart, Inspector O'Neill (Eddie





**PAGE 54:** The famous Sign of the Saint hovers over Dr. Knox (Peter Cushing) in *MANIA* (1959). **LEFT:** Three residents of Mercy Hospital (Endre Muller, Ewen Solon, and John LeMesurier) are suspected of being the notorious JACK THE RIPPER (1960). **RIGHT:** Barbara Shelley is suitably impressed by Sir Donald Wolfitt's Bela Lugosi impression in *BLOOD OF THE VAMPIRE* (1958).

Byrne), at the height of the Ripper murders. The Ripper—a shadowy figure with a rasping voice—is looking for a streetwalker named Mary Clarke, and leaving gutted victims when he doesn't find her. The killings center around Whitechapel's Mercy Hospital, and suspicion soon centers on members of the staff. (Saucy Jack has surgical knowledge, you see.) In the film's final moments, Sir David Rogers (Ewen Solon), top man at Mercy, is revealed to be the Ripper and we're reasonably surprised; Sangster's clever script plays fair with the audience. It seems that Sir David's son was driven to suicide by Mary and he's looking for revenge. (In *THE LODGER*, it was the Ripper's brother, for whom the killer had a decidedly incestuous affection, who was victimized by a woman of the

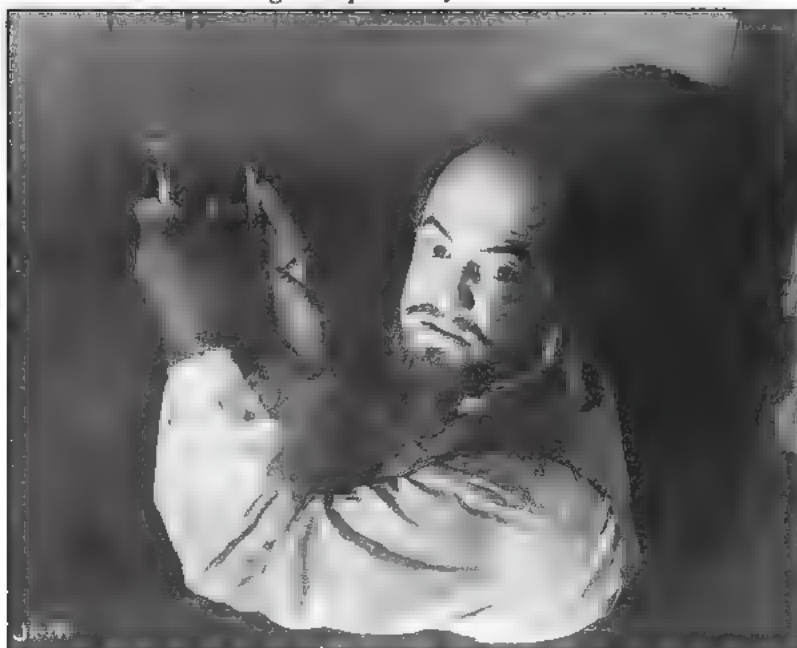
streets.) With half of London on his trail, Sir David hides in a hospital elevator shaft and . . .

That's where the trouble started.

American Joseph E. Levine of Embassy Pictures bought *JACK THE RIPPER* for a Stateside release. *Variety* (December 9) reported that "Paramount is bearing down on its release of *JACK THE RIPPER*. The British meller appears to be getting more attention than many of the company's home grown product."

Levine sunk over \$700,000 into promoting *JACK* in America—and added a gory gimmick. As Jack got the shaft from the descending elevator, the film changed—magically—from black and white into color, and viewers were treated to the sight of his bright red blood seeping

**LEFT:** What's a horror movie without a hunchbacked assistant? Victor Maddern provides the hump and Barbara Shelley the curves in *BLOOD OF THE VAMPIRE*. **RIGHT:** Ewen Solon goes squish in *JACK THE RIPPER*.





through the floor boards. This wasn't the first time for this colorful device (see 1957's *I WAS A TEENAGE FRANKENSTEIN* and 1958's *THE RETURN OF DRACULA*, among others), but . . .

*JACK THE RIPPER* had been trade shown in London on June 17, 1959 and was released on September 21 without raising an eyebrow—and without the bloody color sequence. *The Kinematograph Weekly* (June 4) found *JACK* to be . . . "first rate . . . boldly etched . . . imaginative and effective."

Levine planned saturation booking in America for mid-February 1960—just in time to accidentally coincide with an horrific sex killing in Manchester, New Hampshire. Sandra Valade, 18, was slaughtered as the Whitechapel Murderer plied his trade on local screens. "Lurid—capitalizing on one of the most disgusting crimes in state history," pronounced the *Manchester Guardian*, chastising the *Strand* for showing the film.

On March 1, New Hampshire Governor Wesley Powell demanded that exhibitors "Cease and desist from the showing of this film as a matter of personal and public policy and good morals." He called for the picture to be banned, and, on March 8, the Plymouth Theater in Concord complied. However, with turnstiles spinning all over America, few other theater owners had the "good morals" to follow.

*The Toronto Globe* (February 3) called *JACK* ". . . a dark hued, sleazy, and inconsequential little British movie . . . with a few seconds of color inserted to show oozing blood." *The New York Post* (February 11) philosophized "You go to a movie like this and you get what you asked for—a bucket of gore."

Whatever governors and critics thought, *JACK THE RIPPER*—like his real life counterpart—had the last laugh, as the picture grossed almost \$2 million in the United States, making it the most successful (and controversial) B/B production.

*THE FLESH AND THE FIENDS* (aka *MANIA*, *THE FIENDISH GHOULS*, and *PSYCHO KILLERS*/1960) is one of the best, if under-appreciated, horror movies of the late fifties/early sixties. It's a less artistic, more realistic—painfully so—version of *THE BODY SNATCHER* (1945), the Val Lewton production based on a short story by Robert Louis Stevenson, which in turn was inspired by the real-life "Dr. Knox Incident." Knox, an Edinburgh doctor in the mid-1800s, hired two lowlifes, Burke and Hare, to rob graves to supply his medical school with subjects. When the local cemetery failed to generate enough product, the pair turned to murder.

Director John Gilling joined Baker and Berman to form Triad Productions. He also wrote the screenplay, which stuck reasonably closely to the actual events.

Knox (Peter Cushing) suspects that Burke (George Rose) and Hare (Donald Pleasence) are killing residents of their "boarding house," but isn't terribly concerned; medicine comes first. Caught up in this disgrace are young Chris Jackson (John Cairney), a student in the doctor's school, and Mary Paterson (Billie Whitelaw), a well-meaning but

reckless prostitute. The two incompatible lovers wind up in the dissecting room of Dr. Knox. Burke and Hare finally go too far, with greed and stupidity their downfall. Arrested, Hare gives evidence against Burke to save himself. Burke is sentenced to hang, Hare is blinded by a mob, and Knox, due to his social standing, walks away relatively unscathed.

*THE FLESH AND THE FIENDS* was filmed in May 1959, at Shepperton. Following a February 1, 1960, trade show, the picture went into release in the UK later that month. A year later, it found its way to America, retitled *MANIA*. *Variety* (February 2) found it to be ". . . competently filmed . . . some very good performances . . . one or two meaty scenes. Peter Cushing . . . knows any parody is fatal and plays the part with as much sincerity, dignity, and authority as he would Hamlet."

Dr. Knox is one of Cushing's best performances (they were, actually, all pretty good), but it got lost amid his more splashy work for Hammer. George Rose and Donald Pleasence also get full marks; their portrayals of the sleazy psychos are as repellent as any you'll ever find in a film. (Tony Award-winning performer Rose met a tragic death in real life, brutally murdered on May 5, 1988 by the father and uncle of a teenage boy who was living with the actor.)

Still, the picture was stolen by Billie Whitelaw's Academy Award level acting as the terminally conflicted Mary. Although part of her wants to be "good"—the wife of a respectable man—a larger part wants nothing more than to be a drunken dance-hall slut. Her doomed-from-the-start romance with Jackson is one of the few tragedies to be found in a horror movie.

The picture was well photographed, as was typical of B/B Productions, but the decision to film in black and white might have been a mistake. By 1959/

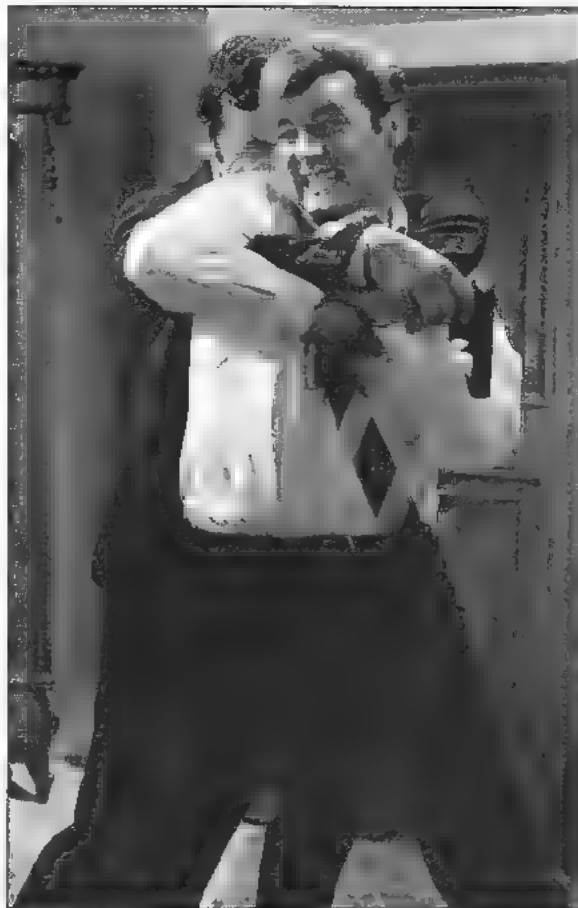
1961, horror fans, courtesy of Hammer and the American International Poe pictures, expected their "period" shocks to come in color. If *THE FLESH AND THE FIENDS* had been shot in Technicolor, Baker and Berman might have had a real hit.

Nevertheless, just about everything in *THE FLESH AND THE FIENDS* is first class, but it's a bit too nasty to have a following.

*THE HELLFIRE CLUB* (1961) conjures up lots of "wonderful" images: upper-crust Brits cavorting Satanically at the expense of the downtrodden locals . . . arrogant, ruthless noblemen led, perhaps, by Peter Cushing, cape flying as he races on horseback, leading the pack on some dastardly mission . . . grotesque rites of initiation performed by those willing to risk damnation by joining the accursed association.

Unfortunately, none of the above actually occurs in this disappointing Baker/Berman entry.

What we actually get is some good-natured 18th Century fun involving Jason (Martin Stephens of *VILLAGE OF*



Roger Moore was Simon Templar, better known as *THE SAINT*, in the popular sixties TV series.

*Continued on page 70*

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# A Study in Corri

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Adrienne Corri

interviewed by  
Bruce G. Hallenbeck

questions compiled by  
Richard Valley



Adrienne Corri is well known to fans of the British horror movie scene. The tall, lanky Scotland-born actress also can list some famous costars as her friends: Hazel Court (*THE DEVIL GIRL FROM MARS*), Boris Karloff and Christopher Lee (*CORRIDORS OF BLOOD*), Laurence Payne (*THE TELL-TALE HEART* and *VAMPIRE CIRCUS*), and Vincent Price and Peter Cushing (*MADHOUSE*). And who will ever forget her appearance in the startling "Singin' in the Rain" rape sequence in Stanley Kubrick's *A CLOCKWORK ORANGE*? She also is one of the very few actresses who not only admits to enjoying horror films, but to enjoying performing in them.

Recently, Adrienne Corri granted *Scarlet Street* an exclusive interview . . . .

**Scarlet Street:** You've starred in a number of horror movies, yet you're not solely identified as a horror-film actress.

**Adrienne Corri:** Listen, horror films are my weakness. I love doing them. I mean, I often had to fight my agent to get him to let me do them.

**SS:** Most actors seem to be ashamed of doing horror films.

**AC:** Oh, I love them! I absolutely love them! And I loved working with people like Vincent Price and Boris Karloff. They were such professionals. Also, there's a great area in horror films where it's left to the actors to imagine. It's like telling wicked fairy stories. There's a scene, for instance, in the one I did with Vincent Price.

**SS:** MADHOUSE.

**AC:** . . . where I had to go into a room and find some bodies in a cupboard. Now, how do you get an actress in the room to find bodies in the cupboard? I said to the director, "I know what we'll do. Let's take the QUEEN CHRISTINA scene when Garbo goes around the furniture touching everything because the man she loves has been there. Let's do our version of it." So going to the cupboard and touching his dressing gown, and having the bodies fall out—that came naturally! An actor is given a little chance to use his imagination. I mean, Vinnie and I had another scene in that film, in which the director said, "My God! It isn't long enough! We need a longer. You'll have to improvise." So we did.

**SS:** Terence Fisher used to let his actors run with their roles.

**AC:** They're very good sometimes, directors. And in a horror film, it's very much in the hands of the actor as well as the director. That may be why I like doing them. They're fun. In A STUDY IN TERROR, a Sherlock Holmes movie with John Neville, I used to be asked, when I had on my scar makeup, not to go into the commissary because I'd be putting other people off their food! (Laughs)

**SS:** Christopher Lee used to run into that problem a lot. Do you think typecasting is helpful or detrimental to a career?

**AC:** I think it's wildly detrimental. But I think it's inevitable, now, with people associating actors on television with the parts they play. I mean, it's become a routine thing; audiences now do it as well as directors. I've done a lot of things in different spheres. I work in theater and I'm a writer and all that, and none of them seem to be associated together, do you know what I mean? I'll play comedy for one film and tragedy for another and a horror film for another. They never see the other side of you. I don't mind, as long as one keeps on doing different things.

**SS:** You're kind of a Renaissance woman.

**AC:** Well, people who can turn their hands to anything will always work. It's very funny, because at the moment, as a researcher, I've been working in the vaults in banks. So I'm back to the horror-film vaults, you know. I'm the only person in England—oh, it sounds very



Adrienne Corri has divided her time between horror movies and more lavish, Grade A productions. Here she is (on the left) in a scene from David Lean's DOCTOR ZHIVAGO (1965)

grand of me—who has learned to crack 18th-century banking. I'm one of the few who understands these books, so I'm spending a lot of time in bank vaults under the city. That's what I was doing yesterday and all this week, really.

**SS:** And this is for a book you're writing?

**AC:** Oh, yes. I've published one book. It's called *The Search for Gainsborough* [Vanguard, 1985]. I'm also an art expert so called . . . 18th century art. I'm now working on another book on Gainsborough, a definitive life history.

**SS:** Let's backtrack a bit, shall we? Where were you born?

**AC:** Well, I was born in Scotland. I'm Scots Italian.

**SS:** Corri is your real surname?

**AC:** Yes, well, it's one of my family names. They were Italian musicians and I'm Scots-Italian. Somehow, they got up to Edinburgh.

**SS:** How did you become an actress?

**AC:** I think I'm a sort of throwback. There are actors on the other side of my family, too, because my other Italian name is Riccoboni. They were in the *commedia dell'arte*, and I'm sort of a throwback, I think.

**SS:** Christopher Lee is half-Italian, too, and he traces his lineage back to the Borgias.

**AC:** I don't go back as grandly as that. But my family were *commedia dell'arte*, and they go back to . . . well, Rousseau took them to Paris and one of my an-

*Continued on page 60*

Who's going to pop out of the box? Vincent Price? Peter Cushing? They starred with Adrienne Corri in MADHOUSE (1974)



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Adrienne Corri is one of the tootsome charms of Hammer Films' *VAMPIRE CIRCUS* (1972), one of the best of the British company's latter-day "blood and bosoms" fright flicks, though she manages throughout to coyly keep her clothes reasonably in place—unlike costars Domini Blythe (as an earlier incarnation of the character played by Corri) and Christina Paul (as Rosa, a village girl seduced and depleted by a vampiric circus performer).

Having all but exhausted the Gothic triumvirate of Baron Frankenstein, Count Dracula, and Mister Mummy at this point in its gruesome history, Hammer was desperately seeking a new formula—but, instead of a formula, decided its followers might prefer being breast fed. The result was a series of titillating films, the majority concerning the undead and taking their cue from the lesbianism of the Sheridan Lefanu novella *Carmilla* (1871), in which the neck was no longer the bloodsucker's favored dining spot. *THE VAMPIRE LOVERS* (1970), *LUST FOR A VAMPIRE* (1971), *COUNTESS DRACULA* (1971), *TWINS OF EVIL* (1971), and *THE SATANIC RITES OF DRACULA* (1973) among them.

# VAMPIRE CIRCUS

*VAMPIRE CIRCUS* stands above most of its sister shriekfests for a number of reasons, not the least being that it doesn't have Ingrid Pitt trying to pass herself off as an 18-year-old. (Suspension of disbelief has to stop somewhere!) Foremost among the virtues of this *CIRCUS* of horrors is the fact that the acting is a cut above that to be found in the other films mentioned above (though Peter Cushing is at the top of his game in *TWINS OF EVIL*). As the sardonic gypsy woman who brings the Circus of Lights to the beleaguered village folk who destroyed her vampire lover, Count Mitterhouse (Robert Tayman), Corri wears a perpetual smirk quite charmingly. Laurence Payne lends conviction to the role

of Mueller, her former husband (back when she was a Blythe spirit), and Thorley Walters is welcome as always as the blustery burgermeister. Diminutive Skip Martin and muscular Dave Prowse are two of the brighter lights of this dark carnival, and Lalla Ward and Robin Sachs bring an androgenous appeal to the roles of two high-flying vampire twins.

A refreshing change for Hammer is the presence of two male beauties who keep the film from being, shall we shall, a total bust: John Moulder-Brown as the young hero, Anton Kersh, and Anthony Corlan as Emil, the shape-shifting cousin of the slaughtered Mitterhouse. Unfortunately, the exhibition of male flesh was never high on Hammer's list, so both Moulder-Brown (who revealed almost all in 1970's *DEEP END*) and Corlan (who left nothing to the

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## ADRIENNE CORRI

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cestors, Luigi Riccoboni, wrote a book called *The History of the Italian Theatre*. I go back to the strolling players, literally. I believe you have a mafia family in America of the same name! (Laughs)

SS: There's a film you made back in 1955 that's a cult item. It's called *DEVIL GIRL FROM MARS*...

AC: Yes! I can't remember very much about it, except that we all had a very larky time. I really enjoyed it. Patricia Laffan and I had met before when I was coming back from making *THE RIVER* with Jean Renoir in India. I played a part in *QUO VADIS*, and Patricia Laffan was in that. And then we met again on *THE DEVIL GIRL FROM MARS*. It was great fun. Again, you see, it's a very fine line doing horror films. You have to have an edge of fantasy. You're telling a black fairy story; that's what it's about, really.

SS: In 1958, you made *CORRIDORS OF BLOOD* with costars Boris Karloff and Christopher Lee.

AC: Yes. In that film I elected to play an Irish. I found out that the madams of brothels in this country at that time were mostly Irish. This upset the director wildly, but I did have one great line to say. Yvonne Romain, who in real life is married to Leshe Bricusse, is about to be raped by Christopher Lee. She's wearing a baby-doll nightie. And I come in, and in an Irish accent—it sounds much better than it would have otherwise—I say to her: "Someday you'll wiggle that bottom of yours just once too often." (Laughs) In English, it didn't sound like anything, but I was trying to do it in Irish. Gave it a bit of a flip...

SS: In that film, Yvonne Romain acted under the name Yvonne Green.

AC: Did she? Well, that's Yvonne Romain. We had great fun. I just saw her the other day in a restaurant. She's

looking great, still. She did a film with a good friend of mine, George Baxt, one that he wrote.

SS: *CIRCUS OF HORRORS*?

AC: Yes! That one! It's a kind of club, you know. We do enjoy doing these horror films.

SS: What's your opinion of *CORRIDORS OF BLOOD*?

AC: I hate to say this, but I hardly ever see the finished product. I'm dreadful at that. It goes for everything, I'm afraid; I don't ever really watch myself or watch a film I've done. It sounds daft, but I did watch most of that one. I thought Boris was marvelous. He was such a nice man, and such a good actor. I enjoyed that in lots of ways. Everybody in it comes to a bad end. Christopher Lee has his face slammed onto a grate. My husband in the film, Francis De Wolff, falls onto a spiked railing. I remember him walking about one evening when it was raining. He had a very bad temper

because there was a spike sticking out of his chest.

SS: What do you remember about director Robert Dun?

AC: I liked him very much. He was a bit put off by the Irish accent, but he came round to it in the end. That's why I thought it was Robert who did the Vincent Price film.

SS: No, *MADHOUSE* was actually directed by Jim Clark.

AC: Five minutes before we did the one with Vinnie, the director suddenly said, "Can you do it with an American accent?" I said, "Well, you didn't tell me this before, for Christ's sake!" And he said, "Well, go away and think about it, Adrienne." So I went off to the corner with the sound guy and we turned out a quavering kind of Marilyn Monroe. Eileen Hayes voice. I taped and taped so that I could get the voice that would fit the character. You see, you do a lot of things for yourself in these films. I had three streaks of white hair, in a sort of homage to Elsa Maxwell. I remember that we changed the music in the end. The director said, "Think of something that's out of copyright." I ended up singing "Perfect Love" from Mozart's *THE MAGIC FLUTE*. I was humming that the really. I think they changed it in later editions, because somebody didn't get the joke.

SS: Tell us more about Boris Karloff.

AC: The only time Boris ever looked horrible was when you tried to get his breakfast in the morning. Boris was a very gentle, very nice man, marvelous to work with, and a great cricket fan. He came back to live in England because of that. I lived near Lords and so we saw each other often.

SS: What about Christopher Lee?

AC: Christopher's a good friend. Again, great to work with. Takes himself a bit seriously. I've found, at times.

SS: Some people describe him as aloof.

AC: Oh, no, no! I never thought of him as aloof. He's tall, but that doesn't make him aloof. No, no's great, really, he's fun. When I've worked on other things, Christopher has come to visit me, and we've chatted. Maybe he's a bit shy. I don't think he's grand about himself or aloof or anything. Especially when you're working, there's a nice chemistry thing.

SS: In 1961, you made *THE TELL-TALE HEART* with Laurence Payne.

AC: Yes, and Dermot Walsh, who used to be married to Hazel Court. We made it on quite a tight budget, and all of us were going off to work on other things. That film, again, owed a lot to the way the actors interplayed and the way we discussed the scenes. I remember that, when I was appearing in a play on Broadway, I had three of these films playing on 42nd Street, and *THE TELL-TALE HEART* was one of them. Actors in the play used to think it was great fun to make up parties to go see my films.

SS: *THE TELL-TALE HEART* is a very atmospheric picture.

AC: It has got a good atmosphere. We didn't have a very big budget and we

had to work hard to keep the feeling. We did try to keep the authenticity of the period. Laurence, of course, is a very good classical actor. He did a great *HAMLET* and all the rest of it. You know, in a funny way, acting in horror films is quite a test for actors. You have to be very good and professional. A classical background's important.

SS: For instance, Peter Cushing...

AC: Peter was a very nice man. I got to kill him in the film with Vincent, *MADHOUSE*, as he'd never been killed before. But I can't recall who directed *THE TELL-TALE HEART*.

SS: Ernest Morris.

AC: Ernie Morris, yes, of course! Ernie had been a cameraman, so that's why a lot of that is very interesting. It's shot very well. But other people see these things, and the actor sometimes doesn't. You enjoy making it and enjoy the other performances, but sometimes you think, "Oh Christ, I should have done that differently. Did I help that scene?" It's sometimes an embarrassment seeing yourself.

SS: In 1965, you appeared in *A STUDY IN TERROR*, which was the first film encounter between Sherlock Holmes and Jack the Ripper. Your character was called Angela Osborne.

AC: That's the one with the scar.

SS: Right. Angela is described as a woman, before her disfigurement, "with the face of an angel and the soul of a devil." Yet, when we meet her, she's a sympathetic character who's been mistreated. Then, in the very next scene, Holmes says she only thinks she's mistreated. What was your viewpoint on Angela Osborne: angel or devil?

AC: You have to keep an ambivalence, keep the audience guessing. I think it probably kept me guessing. The thing I remember most is that we had a very good German actor called O.W. Fischer [billed as Max Steiner!] in it. We had to fall through a flaming staircase at the end, which nobody had told us before. I'm terrified of fire, and I had to sit in a four-poster bed and have an oil lamp thrown at it. Both of us balked at this; we said we'd do it only if champagne was kept flowing on the stage for us both! (Laughs) And the producers agreed to it! No, I think that the character is deliberately ambivalent. You had to be kept guessing with that one. Still, if you have acid thrown in your face, you've been mistreated. So I think I was on the sympathetic side.

SS: What's your opinion of *A STUDY IN TERROR*?

AC: I thought it was very good. I liked it a lot. We had Georgia Brown, didn't we, as the singer in the pub? There were very good actors in that one. Donald Houston was awfully good, O.W. Fischer was great, and I liked working with John Neville... again, a very good classical actor and an old friend.

SS: Do you have a personal theory as to the true identity of Jack the Ripper?

AC: Well, it's the eternal question, isn't it? It goes on and on and on, I suppose because he had never been caught.

SS: The trail's a bit cold at this point.

AC: Yes, I think so. But it's a story that fascinates everybody.

SS: Have you ever appeared in any other Sherlock Holmes stories?

AC: No, I haven't. That was the only Sherlock Holmes I did. My ex-brother-in-law, Jeremy Brett, was a good Sherlock Holmes, wasn't he?

SS: He was in the *A STUDY IN TERROR* was a step up in quality for the producer, Herman Cohen.

AC: Oh, yes! He was the one who had to provide us the champagne! He was always on the set and he was a very nice guy, really. It did well for him, I think, that movie.

SS: Did you have any input on the makeup used in the film for your scars?

AC: Well, I wanted an eye hanging half out on my cheek, but that was not allowed! They thought it was bad enough as it was. I was a bit put off by that, but nevertheless... when we started, the makeup was so laborious to put on every day that finally I said, "Look, what are we doing this for? Why don't we just take a mold of my face and make the thing so that we can tack it along the edges and stick it on every day like a pancake?"

which I'm afraid we wound up doing in the end. It was just as easy to precast the scar as to build it up every day with the makeup men. And it took less time.

SS: Next, we come to a movie called *THE MELLIFIRE CLUB*...

AC: Oh, that one! I've never seen it, either! (Laughs) It isn't really a horror film, but it's a fun swashbuckler.

SS: Is it true that Europe saw a slightly racier version of the film than we got here in the States?

AC: They did several versions of it. One for Japan, one for South America... I had that bath scene, and I hadn't done a bath scene before. A nude scene. I thought, "Oh, Lord, I'm not going to like this!" But it ends up as the most prosaic thing in the world. There you are, sitting in a tub and they shout out, "Japanese version!"—which meant less water. (Laughs) And so the prop man would come over with a bucket and the water would come out of the bath. Then it would be the French or English version and we had to have more water, so more water went in. We did about five versions of that!

SS: The American has some very brief flashes of nudity.

AC: I think that, in the Japanese version and the South American, there were varying degrees of nudity. There was a quite funny moment, because the girl playing the heroine, Kai Fischer, was a stripper—but the minute she became an actress, she would not take her clothes off! Great screams and shouts went up. With the floor filled with pictures of her stark naked, the producers said, "Look, you've taken your clothes off here!" And she said, "Now I'm an actress. I don't take my clothes off!" (Laughs) It was a bit difficult for them.

SS: Those temperamental actors!

AC: Temperamental strippers! Actors never get that temperamental!



Without a doubt it is Adrienne Corri's performance in Stanley Kubrick's *A CLOCKWORK ORANGE* (1971) that marks her most notorious motion-picture appearance. In the scene, Malcolm McDowell and his mates rape Corri to the tune of "Singin' in the Rain."

**SS:** What was the real Hellfire Club itself?

**AC:** It was a group of men who used to meet for devil worship and orgies and God knows what. The film is based on an 18th-century character who was very shady.

**SS:** The Satanic aspect was played down in the film?

**AC:** Yes, I think it was. The Peter Arne character was based on the real man rather loosely, but there was a Satanic thing in the original Hellfire Club.

**SS:** How would you describe the character you played in *THE HELLFIRE CLUB*?

**AC:** I don't know. I'm a little inclined to play characters you have to try and make your mind up about. The villain was Peter Arne. The lady was much more on the side of the hero. She was a villainess, but with a soft touch.

**SS:** *THE HELLFIRE CLUB* is, of course, a period film. Do you prefer costume or contemporary films?

**AC:** I love working in period costume. I like that romantic look. That film was particularly lovely! The dresses were by Cecil Beaton. The dresses I wore were from a play that Cecil had written about the Gainsborough girls. They were very, very beautiful. In fact, poor Keith Michell—I refused to be shot through the bodice of the pink one, so he had to shoot me in the bosom! (Laughs) I'd promised the costumer that I wouldn't have marks on the dress. The death scene had to be engineered around the neckline of the dress.

**SS:** Let's move from the past to the future. You made *A CLOCKWORK ORANGE* for director Stanley Kubrick.

**AC:** A tough guy to work with. It's good working with him, because you know that visually the film is going to be good. I had also read the book and had never understood why it hadn't been made into a film. Then I discovered that Stanley had bought it years before and nobody would touch it. So Stanley entered into a deal with Warner Bros. that he would do two films for them, and one had to be *A CLOCKWORK ORANGE*. Stanley can be difficult—especially difficult, I think, for women. He's not entirely sympathetic. His original idea for casting that film called for actresses to go into an empty office, take their clothes off, and do a photograph. And they would be taped. I told him to go and stuff it. Goodbye, Stanley Kubrick; I'm not doing those kinds of interviews. I said to hell with it. I was off doing a play at Greenwich and Stanley did not like the lady who was eventually cast. After two days, the poor lady was in hospital! That scene was tough to do. I'm an ex dancer, so I'm fairly strong. Stanley sent for me and I said, "Fine." I got a few remarks like, "Suppose we don't like her tits?" So I said, "Then you pay me and you send me back, Stanley, but you pay me." And that's it, you see. One has to be very tough with Stanley. He appreciated it. I also used to get his name wrong—I used to call him Sidney. That used to drive him mad. It's very good for directors—keeps them in their place. Again, one wanted to get the theme right. We all sat around and worked on it for about 10 days, actually, before we shot it. We cut all the dialogue from the scene. We found it worked better. He's very good in that he lets you see the rushes and see the way it's being cut. I liked working with Stanley. A curious man.

**SS:** Obviously, the rape scene is one of the most violent scenes in the entire film.

**AC:** It was pretty tough to do, I must say. Stanley withdrew it for a time, because he felt he hadn't succeeded. It's really an anti-violence film, but rather like trying to make an antiwar film, it turned out glamorous. The violence turned glamorous. Stanley was very alarmed by that; he withdrew it. It was meant to be the other side of the coin to his 2001—the black side of the future. Stanley said to Malcolm McDowell, "Do you know any songs?" Malcolm said, "Well, I only know one," and went into "Singin' in the Rain." One of Stanley's rather black remarks while we were doing that scene was, "You're playing the Debbie Reynolds part, Corri." I said, "Thanks." But he said in the beginning, "We don't want to do a Peckinpah" and when you think about that movie, you see no blood at all. The violence really is all in your own head. It's suggested. The only blood drawn in *A CLOCKWORK ORANGE* is a scratch across the back of one of the actors' hands. The rape scene is frightening because of what you don't see. We choreographed it like a dance scene. We really tried to leave it to the audience, and people think they saw a great deal more than they actually did. I thought it was very well done.

**SS:** In 1970, Hammer made a rare foray into sci-fi with a picture called *MOON ZERO TWO*.





**VAMPIRE CIRCUS (1971)** is one of the best horror movies from Hammer Films' later period. Here, Adrienne Corri and Anthony Corlan (who later changed his surname to Higgins) attack a victim in a typically bloody finale.

**AC:** Oh, yes! That was designed by my friend Carl Thoms. Very uncomfortable costumes. I played the police chief on the moon. There was only one wonderful moment in it, when the Swedish actor who was playing the lead, James Olson, got a bit scruffy. I was drinking a glass of ice water, he was in one of those rubber spacesuits, and I said, "Shut up!" and poured the ice water into his suit. He was very uncomfortable for some time! (Laughs) It was fun to make the film, it was great fun. I have a sense of humor about all this. You do take it seriously, because you want the effects to be right for the audience. But you always keep on that line of humor. If you don't do that well, you lose the movie and the audience.

**SS:** *VAMPIRE CIRCUS* is a Hammer Film whose reputation grows as the years go by.

**AC:** Yes, a lot of people seem to have liked that one.

**SS:** What was it like to work with first time director Robert Young?

**AC:** Well, he was very good. He's a good director, Robert. Unfortunately, in the beginning, he wanted to use real bats. But real bats don't like light, so they all went up and sat in the roof of the studio. Then they went into the dressing

rooms all over Pinewood, which drove everybody mad. And when they did sit on you, they ended up looking like butterfly brooches. So we ended with up with the big fruitbats again. Robert was good to work with, except again, in the circus scenes, the dialogue was improvised. Nobody had bothered to write it. Robert said to me, "Now we have the lines in Scene 78." I said, "There aren't any. There's nothing there. Look in the script." He said, "Oh, my God, what are we going to do?" And I said, "Well, let's just do it." I did invent in that film—next time you look at it, you'll see—I invented something which became known as "instant lurking." We had a day when we had nothing on the schedule, and Robert was very worried. I said, "Why don't we do some instant lurking?" "What do you mean?" I said, "Look, you're going to need a lot of cutaway shots. You're going to need cuts of people following this person and that person and you're going to need cutaways to us all. I will lurk!" So we did a lot of instant lurking, which is coming round the caravan and looking significant and then disappearing again. Or hiding behind a bush and looking significant and disappearing again. We

used every shot, and it became known as instant lurking.

**SS:** It sounds like you should have received writer or director credit on the film.

**AC:** All actors on horror films do this! There's quite a lot of creative input from everybody. Chris Lee, when we were doing *CORRIDORS OF BLOOD*, did the same thing. We worked together. Look at the cast list of those Hammer Films. It became like a club to be in, you know?

**SS:** In his *Scarlet Street* interview, John Moulder Brown said he was impressed by the professionalism of the cast in *VAMPIRE CIRCUS*, but felt that he didn't have the right attitude toward making the movie. He took it too lightly.

**AC:** Maybe he was taking himself too seriously. Maybe he just wasn't used to the way we all fell into the roles. He may not have understood how we worked things out for ourselves. We had a lot to do with the animals in that, which was fun. I remember there was a wonderful moment when the tiger was meant to bite the arm of Lalla Ward. She played my daughter. The woman who ran the circus, Mary Chipperfield, was standing there saying, "Go ahead, touch it. Touch it! They've made the fake arm of pork! Tigers don't like pork!" I didn't know

this. I said, "What do you mean? A kosher tiger?" She said, "Yes, that's right. They don't touch pork." Sure enough, the arm was put in and poor old Rajah looked at it and gagged. Couldn't touch it. Wouldn't take a bite or anything. Mary and I ended up in the cage. I'm quite good with animals and she let me near them. I even walked the panther myself. I was trying to open Rajah's jaws and get this goddamned arm into his teeth. If you look at it again, there's only a very short cut; that tiger is gagging on that arm. It hated it. It was very reproachful with us afterward.

**SS:** *Anthony Corlan costarred with you as the vampire Emil*

**AC:** Oh, yes! He was great to work with. It's funny that I haven't worked with him again.

**SS:** *He's now known as Anthony Higgins. He was in THE BRIDE with Sting and in YOUNG SHERLOCK HOLMES*

**AC:** Ah, that's probably why I haven't seen his name. I was surprised I hadn't, because I thought he was good. He was very professional about it and had a very good sense of humor.

**SS:** *You mentioned before that you like to play ambiguous characters. There's a slight ambiguity about the Gypsy Woman.*

**AC:** Let's face it, when you look at the plot of *VAMPIRE CIRCUS*, it's *THE VISIT* turned into a vampire film: the woman who comes back to destroy the village . . .

**SS:** *Was this ambiguity in the script or was it improvised?*

**AC:** The ambiguity was a bit in the script. It's the way I played it, too. You have to keep audiences guessing. It's the essential thing in suspense. This is the thing that one has to hold in mind for any character you play—any and every character in the film must keep the audience guessing about themselves . . . whether hero, villainess, heroine, or whatever. You've got to have layers that may appear or may not, so the audience is not sure of where that character will go.

**SS:** *We really liked Skip Martin, the dwarf in VAMPIRE CIRCUS*

**AC:** Skippy I could have murdered several times. He was very good, but Skippy was the biggest upstager ever! He was a pain in the neck, actually. But he was very good in it.

**SS:** *And he was also in THE HELLFIRE CLUB—in a small part*

**AC:** Yes! (Laughs) Skippy gets around. And he *does* have a very large ego. He's got a Charlton Heston ego in that small body.

**SS:** *Rumor has it that the final scenes of MADHOUSE were changed at the insistence of the cast*

**AC:** The end just didn't work, the one they had originally. It became, "What shall we do?" The eternal question, you

know? We suggested that perhaps we should end up with this kind of "married bliss" bit. We thought it would work. That's why I hummed the Mozart—it seemed a good joke.

**SS:** *What was it like to act opposite Vincent Price?*

**AC:** Oh, he was great! I liked working with him a lot. We became great friends, but that happens with all the people in these casts. Boris and I used to always get together after the film.

**SS:** *What about Peter Cushing?*

**AC:** Peter Cushing was sweet. He was very sad, his wife had just died. He was very unhappy. He was a very reserved and retiring man. Peter's character was a very pathetic character, very held back. That's why he was so damn good on those films. He brought so much more to them.

**SS:** *In addition to Stanley Kubrick, you worked with another famous director: Otto Preminger on BUNNY LAKE IS MISSING*



Laurence Payne and Adrienne Corri find themselves surrounded by the constabulary in *THE TELL-TALE HEART* (1963), subtly retitled *HIDDEN ROOM OF 1000 HORRORS!*

**AC:** Oh, yes! I've worked with a lot of tough directors, so one learns how to handle them. The thing with tough directors is that often their bark is worse than their bite. You just have to measure it. I always think to myself what all actors should think: if I don't like this film and I don't like this director, I can always leave through the front door. I can go. I always think that; therefore you don't get into states. It's just another person you're working with, and if you don't like it, you can just say, "I don't like it." I've done it once. But that was a different matter; it wasn't a horror film. I walked out through the gates of a castle dressed as Queen Elizabeth. Then I thought, "What the hell do I do now? I can't go back." It was a very nasty producer, actually, not a director. So I had to walk down country lanes for a mile dressed as Queen Elizabeth, to get a taxi to go back to the hotel. But always you hold that in mind, so that if somebody shouts at you,

you say, "Who are you shouting at, you great twerp? What are you going on for?"

**SS:** *You don't want to reveal the name of that movie?*

**AC:** Well, actually, it was a series that they were making on the history of England. Glenda Jackson had done the medieval one, and when she knew I was playing Elizabeth for the Elizabethan series, took bets with fellow actors about how long I'd last. And Glenda won. She gave me two days, and it was exactly two days. I didn't realize it at the time, because I knew nothing about the producer, but the producer was so unpleasant that I started getting telegrams from people I'd never met, actors from all around the world, saying "Congratulations!" So it wasn't a great damaging thing at all, really. It's just what one should always hold in mind. You're not trapped; you can go if you don't like it. If people shout at you, you can shout back.

You're there to do a job. If the person is not going to let you do it the way you want to do it, then you say goodbye. Otherwise you have nervous breakdowns, take dope, and go mad or something . . .

**SS:** *In BUNNY LAKE, you worked with Laurence Olivier*

**AC:** I'd worked with Olivier before in a play, and I'd done my first screen test as Ophelia for Olivier. I'd known him a very long time. He wasn't very mad about Otto. I don't think. Otto had me in nearly every other film he did as a kind of mascot. I'd turn around to him and say, "Come on, what are you shouting for?" There was a wonderful day on *BUNNY LAKE*, when Otto was shouting so much in the nursery class that all the children got up—and they were only three and four years old—and they said, "We don't like you! We're not staying.

We're going!" The entire nursery class walked out! (Laughs) Otto had to go on his knees to get those children back!

**SS:** *What are you doing these days? You're writing another book?*

**AC:** Well, I'm writing another book on Gainsborough, but I'm also still acting. I've just done one of the *LOVEJOYS*, an hour long one with Ian McShane. I'm still acting, but I'm doing more writing.

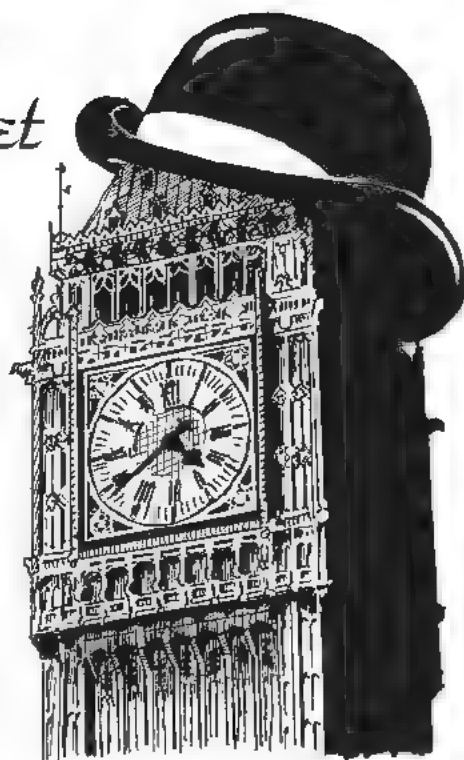
**SS:** *One last comment: you have our favorite line in VAMPIRE CIRCUS. Somebody asks you, "Why are you here?" and your reply is, "To steal the money from dead men's eyes!"*

**AC:** When I first saw that line, I shrieked with laughter and said, "Oh, this is great!" The other actors all said, "Go on, Corri, how are you going to say it?" And I said to them, "You wait!" Listen, if you can say that, you can say anything!" (Laughs)

**Missing some back issues? Check out pages six and seven!**

# Our Man on Baker Street Ian Richardson

interviewed by David Stuart Davies



I am always apprehensive when I am to meet someone I admire. If I'm going to be disappointed, then I would prefer not to meet the person at all. That way I can keep my dreams intact. I have been so very lucky with my Sherlock Holmeses—Jeremy Brett, Peter Cushing, Christopher Lee, Clive Merrison, and Douglas Wilmer have all proved to be charm personified and I left their presence still full of admiration and respect. What, then, would Ian Richardson be like? He played the Great Detective in two TV movies in the early eighties, but now is better known in Britain for his portrayal of Francis Urquhart, an icy politician who possesses a stare that could freeze flames, in the television series *HOUSE OF CARDS* and its sequels. Is this the real Richardson, I wondered? So it was with some trepidation that I made my way to the Savoy Theatre in London on an unseasonably warm day in February to meet him. He had agreed to see me in his dressing room before the show that evening—*THE MAGISTRATE* by Pinero.

As I descended the stairs backstage, I was quite nervous. I need not have been. The man was charm itself. "Come in," he cried, as though addressing an old friend. "Do make yourself comfortable. It's nice to meet you." No ice here. No glacial stare. Instead, the eyes twinkled with warmth and the handshake was firm and friendly.

When I had requested this interview by letter, Ian Richardson had replied that "the Holmes films were so long ago. I don't really remember much." Dear reader, he remembered everything!

First of all, I asked him how the Holmes project came about. He smiled, rubbed his hands, rather like Holmes, and said, "Well, it's a long story and rather complicated, so sit back in your chair and I'll tell you. I made two films [*THE SIGN OF FOUR* and *THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES*], but there were meant to be six. The series was the branchchild—if that's the word—of Sy Weintraub, an American producer. He had been successful in the seventies making a series of Tarzan films for television and, as they'd sort of run out, he was in search of another subject matter. He lit upon Sherlock Holmes."

Strange, I observed, that this should have been the time that Granada Television was also considering a Holmes series with Jeremy Brett.

"Ah," cried Richardson, raising his forefinger (another Holmes gesture). "That was the fly in our ointment. Initially, an unseen fly. You see, when Sy Weintraub was planning the films, he was unaware that the copyright on the Holmes stories was about to expire in England and he had to go through a great deal of legal negotiations with the Conan Doyle estate in order to gain permission to use them. However, he was

totally ignorant of Granada's plans to film a series with Jeremy Brett. I may add that I was totally ignorant of this, also. Anyway, Weintraub came over to England on the hunt for a Sherlock Holmes. He engaged a producer named Otto Plaschkes, who just happened to see me on television one night in a terrible little detective thing I did, playing a police inspector who, in the course of his duty, attempted to emulate the methods of Sherlock Holmes. It was called *THE COTSWOLD MURDER*. Apparently, Otto said to his wife, 'There's our Sherlock Holmes!' My fate was sealed.

"I went along to be interviewed and they were slightly dismayed that I was only five foot ten. I explained that, in *THE COTSWOLD MURDER*, I had worn

The gang's all here for the grand finale of *THE SIGN OF FOUR* (1983). Seated are Dr. Watson (David Healy), Mary Morstan (Cherie Lunghi), and Jonathan Small (Joe Melia). Inspector Athelny Jones (Terence Rigby) hovers behind Small, who is clearing up a few minor plot points for Sherlock Holmes (Ian Richardson).



At *THE SIGN OF FOUR* photo © 1983 Robt & Partners/Spectrum, limited





**LEFT:** Sherlock Holmes (Ian Richardson) questions Thaddeus Sholto (Richard Heffer) about the Great Agra Treasure and **THE SIGN OF FOUR** (1983). **CENTER:** Holmes, Watson (David Healy), and Sholto discover the body of Sholto's brother, Bartholomew (Clive Merrison). **RIGHT:** Holmes and Watson (Donald Churchill) trail Sir Henry along Baker Street in **THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES** (1983).

lifts. Anyway, Weintraub liked me and he signed me up for six films.

As it turned out, only two of the movies were made because it was during the shooting of the second feature—**THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES**—that the news broke that Granada was going "to do all the Sherlock Holmes stories with Jeremy Brett."

Richardson gave a gentle laugh and shook his head sadly as he recollected what happened next. It was obvious that, from this distance in time, it was amusing to him. "Weintraub was furious, because he'd paid a lot of money to get permission from the estate and here

was Granada saying, 'Thank you but we're going to do it.' So Weintraub took them to court. He had a very good case, apparently, but eventually there was an out of court settlement for an extraordinary sum of money—something like two million pounds—which was enough for Weintraub to cover his costs on both **THE SIGN OF FOUR** and **THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES**, and make a profit, too. And so he wrapped the project up. But, you know, in an odd sort of way I heaved a sigh of relief. That was because I didn't want to get too associated with Sherlock Holmes. I felt that Jeremy—such a nice man,

and he's greatly missed—towards the end rather regretted it. And I lost out on playing the emperor in the film of **AMADEUS** because Weintraub wouldn't let me go while things were still pending with the court case. This upset me terribly."

And then with a broad grin Richardson threw back his arms in a theatrical gesture and declared, "So that's how it happened!"

By now, he was in full flow, enjoying reliving this past experience, memorable as yesterday, it seemed to me. Perhaps more so. So, I wondered, how did he prepare for the role?

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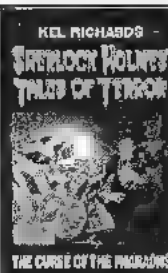
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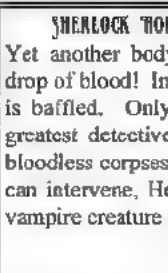
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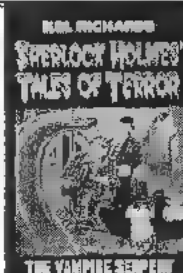
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"Well I took it very seriously. I was thrilled to be playing the part and I read all the stories and created my own reference book on Holmes. It's just as well I did a lot of research... (arched eyebrow)... because nobody else did much. I could say to them, 'no, no! Holmes would never do that'."

It is my impression from reviewing these movies that, for those who know their Sherlock Holmes well or even just their Victorian period, the writing was very American—phrases and actions are included in the films that no English writer worth his salt would have countenanced. I made this observation to Richardson and he nodded in agreement. "The writer was Charles Pogue—'Call me Chuck.' He's actually a very nice man, but very American. He's famous for having written the screenplay to the remake of *THE FLY*, which Cronenberg made. Anyway, it was just as well I had done all this research, because not only was I able to Anglicize some of my text and make it sound a bit more like Conan Doyle, but I was able to correct them on one or two inaccuracies. I couldn't, unfortunately, budge them and prevent them spending 10 thousand pounds on top of the budget to build a separate bedroom to show that Watson actually occupied a room of his own. He had to be shown to have a room separate from Holmes' bedroom in case there was any... (a wave of the hand). I said to them 'Good heavens, my last stage appearance was as Henry Higgins in *MY FAIR LADY* and there he is with Colone.

Pickering, a couple of bachelors, rambling about this house enjoying each other's company. What are you worried about? Extraordinary!"

I had heard that the producers had extended their puritanism to Holmes' drug-taking, also, and had suppressed references to it. Richardson confirmed this to be the case. "I had wanted to do more of the drug thing, but they wouldn't have it. I thought it was important because, in a curious way, this one area of weakness humanizes an otherwise inhuman computer type of man. But they allowed me to smoke a lot—and even that wouldn't be allowed today."

I pointed out that he smoked a Meerschaum pipe quite often in both pictures and, while this presents us with a popular image of Holmes, it is inaccurate in that the pipe never features in the original stories.

Richardson admitted that he had to "bow to the American request" to smoke the Meerschaum. "Weintraub said, 'This is the image of Sherlock Holmes.' But I pointed out that he smoked all sorts of pipes—briars, clays—but not a great monstrosity like the Meerschaum. So just hooded his eyes and said, 'You will smoke the Meerschaum.' So I did. It was all part of the attitude on set anyway—a kind of 'what does it matter? who will notice anyway?' attitude."

In the next issue: Richardson explains the mystery of the two Watsons, the trouble he brought upon himself through his disguise, his involvement with Peter Cushing, another Holmes film that wasn't made, and his future as Sherlock Holmes



# Book Ends

## The Scarlet Street Review of Books

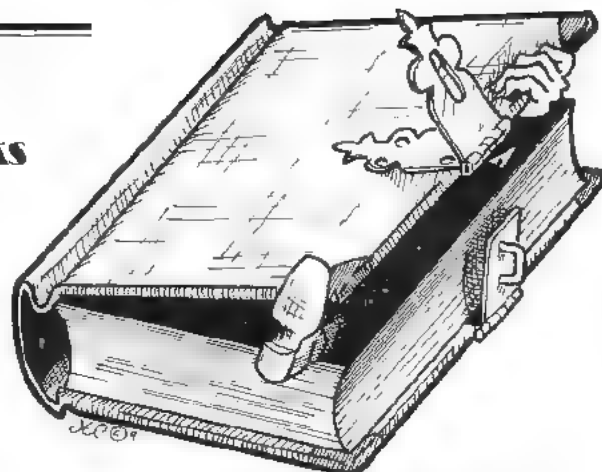
**DRACULA:**  
**THE FIRST HUNDRED YEARS**  
 Edited by Bob Madison  
 Midnight Marquee Press, 1997  
 322 pages—\$20.00

Roll over Bram Stoker and tell Lugosi the news! Generally speaking, Dracula aficionados tend to fall into one of two camps—Bela Lugosi or Christopher Lee fans. Well, Bob Madison will have none of this. Instead, he comes down squarely for Frank Langella, who he says is "simply the finest, most gifted actor ever to play this classic vampire role." Not content with this bit of contrariness, he contends that the 1979 John Badham/Langella film (which always struck me as a kind of DRACULA NIGHT FEVER) is the one Dracula film that's a must see! With this to work from, one might quite rightly be a little skeptical of *Dracula: The First Hundred Years*. And I admit, I was—and I am.

As with most books that boast a wide variety of writers (the major point they seem in accord on is that Lon Chaney Jr. was one of the worst choices for the Count), this one is uneven and boasts no clear central premise, despite the claim that "Dracula is us, and we are Dracula" and that the book will reveal that "the image of Dracula is forever shifting and changing, reflecting not himself, but our own fears and secret longings." Nothing contained in the book seems to back up this heady claim, but, for all that, there are some very fine and enlightening things to be found among its 300-plus pages.

Gregory William Mank provides an entertaining and insightful take on the respective Draculas of Lugosi and John Carradine, with his usual attention to detail, research, and the well-turned phrase. Mank's real coup, though, is the book's most intriguing entry, "Dracula's Last Bride," a remarkable revisionist take on Hope Lininger, best known as Mrs. Bela Lugosi. No Five Completely written out of Tim Burton's ED WOOD and generally written off by Lugosi fans and historians, Hope Lugosi becomes a fascinating link to the actor's last year in Mank's chapter, as he dispels the myriad of anti-Hope myths. For this section alone, the book is well worth having.

Mank is not the only writer to shine in these pages, though. Randy Vest's entry, "Sex and Eroticism From Dracula and His Brood: A Tooth-Cheek Overview," is lively, entertaining, and occasionally thoughtful, if at times a little too glib. Gary Don Rhodes' "The Vampire's Kiss: Echoes of Bram Stoker in the Vampire Film of the 1980s" is well-done and fresh. David J. Skal's entry, "Afterword—Him and Me: A Personal Slice of the Dracula Century" (which has appeared in *Scarlet Street*), is exactly what it claims to be—and a fine piece of work it is, one that must surely touch every person who came to these films in the 1960s via the old SHOCK THEATER package on television.



What is most unclear about Madison's approach is the apparent need to indulge in Christopher Lee bashing at every opportunity. I confess to being no great fan of Lee's Dracula, but this seems wrong-headed and needless. Love or loathe Lee, it is impossible to deny his impact in the role and his place in the horror genre. Indeed, by seeking to undermine Lee's stature by citing that he has less dialogue and screen time in all his Hammer films than Lugosi had in the original DRACULA (1931), Madison does just the opposite. Isn't it remarkable that Lee made such a name for himself as one of the two major Draculas on such skimpy material? The man must have *something* going for him....

Mixed bag it is, but, if the reader goes in warned that there are apt to be some things to set his fangs on edge, *Dracula: The First Hundred Years* is not without its merits, though I am not at all certain they entirely outweigh its flaws.

—Ken Hanke

As Count Dracula, Christopher Lee has rung the bells for legions of horror fans the world over—but not for everyone.



**MYSTERY! A CELEBRATION**

Ron Miller  
 KQED Books, 1996  
 304 pages—\$24.95

Well, it's about bloody time! Since MYSTERY! first went on the air on February 5, 1980, it has been thrilling, amusing, and sometimes exasperating mystery buffs around the world. It has been responsible for introducing Agatha Christie, Dorothy Sayers, Margery Allingham, and a dozen other writers from the Golden Age to an entirely new generation. It has given us the definitive Sherlock Holmes. And it has probably raised the literacy level, sending newly baptized mystery fanatics scurrying to local bookstores to find the latest adventures of their favorite sleuths. It is long since past time that MYSTERY! was rewarded with a book of its own.

How does one go about encapsulating, in 300 odd pages, 17 years of superb entertainment? Probably, as the joke goes, with great difficulty. Only in reading this book can one appreciate the tremendous scope encompassed by the series. The fictional sources range from medieval times to the present day, and the characters, from an imaginary monk herbalist (Brother Cadfael) who seems so real, to a real spy (Reilly, Ace of Spies)



whose life seems imaginary, from a profane, hard-bitten, and indomitable policewoman (DCI Jane Tennison) to an antique, intuitive, but equally indomitable spinster (Miss Jane Marple), are so disparate as to seem to come from different planets. And the styles! Compare the campy madness of *SHE FELL AMONG THIEVES*, by Dornford Yates, to the tragedy of *CAUSE CELEBRE*, which author Terence Rattigan based on a real case, or the intricate puzzles concocted by mystery magician Agatha Christie to the swirls of psychological fog whipped up by *REBECCA*'s Daphne Du Maurier

No other genre has covered such a wide range of styles and substances (from Morse's beer to Sherlock's seven-per-cent solution). They are all here, in what is rightly called a celebration. Ron Miller's construction of the volume deftly adds to the enjoyment. There is an appreciative foreword by P.D. James, the creator of the formidable Commander Adam Dalgleish, in which she expresses her gratitude to television and adds a tart warning to adapters: "It may occasionally be necessary to drop a character, it should never be necessary to introduce a new one."

Miller ably explores the genesis of *MYSTERY!*, first suggested as a spin-off of *MASTERPIECE THEATRE*. Joan Wilson, the executive producer (and, coincidentally, wife of Jeremy Brett), was responsible for cobbling together, at short notice, the first collection of British mys-

teries, giving American fans a welcome alternative to the shoot 'em-up crime dramas that had, for too long, been their only fare. As the series has grown, it has reached a level of excellence sometimes detrimental to itself, as when the *PRIME SUSPECT* series received such critical and popular attention that it was yanked from *MYSTERY!* to enhance *MASTERPIECE THEATRE*.

Miller is most original in the organization of his material. He places his investigators under different headings, such as "Victorian Detectives," "Elegant Detectives," and "The Talented Amateurs." Under "Elegant" you will, of course, find Hercule Poirot. There is an elegant essay discussing the TV Poirot and the literary Poirot. There are sidebars with photos, quotes from critics, actors, and the odd tidbit of information, such as the menu for a dinner served by Chief Inspector Japp to Poirot. There is a small column featuring Captain Hastings (Hugh Fraser), though I searched in vain for one with the unflappable Miss Lemon (Pauline Moran). There is an essay on Agatha Christie. There is an interview with Poirot portrayer David Suchet. And there is a point where the organization, at times, breaks down.

Miller writes: "In 1995, when the sixth series had been completed, Suchet learned from rumor that there would be no more." In a sidebar, it's noted that the series ran from 1990 to 1996. In the book's season index, *POIROT* is included in the 1996-1997 season. Else-



Joan Hickson as Miss Jane Marple

where, it is twice mentioned that the *SERGEANT CRIBB* series "never became a big audience favorite," but in the Holmes chapter a sidebar on Baker Street begins, "With the tremendous success of the other Victorian series, *SERGEANT CRIBB*..."

But enough about mistakes! Every book has them, and they don't reduce the truth worth of this one. Better to dwell on the wonderful Edward Gorey illustrations sprinkled throughout, the evocative photos, and the Trivia Quiz, guaranteed to exercise your little gray cells. Enjoy!

Ken Schachtman

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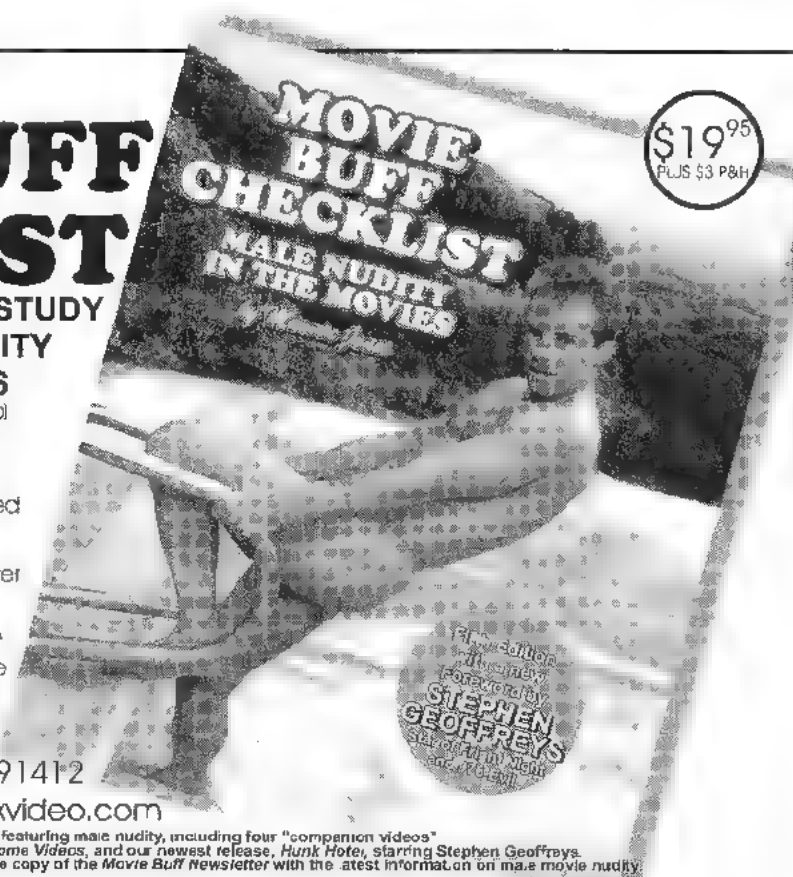
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Number Two Son Charlie Chan, Jr. (Layne Tom Jr), Charlie Chan (Warner Oland), and Number One Son Lee Chan (Keye Luke) in a warm family portrait from *CHARLIE CHAN AT THE OLYMPICS* (1937). One year later, in the first Chan film starring Sidney Toler, Number Two Son was identified as Jimmy (Sen Yung) and Layne Tom Jr. was recast as Number Three Son Tommy (later to be played by Benson Fong). Got it? You'd better, because there's going to be a quiz . . .

## WARNER OLAND

*Continued from page 47*

by Twentieth Century Fox due to his failure to complete *CHARLIE CHAN AT THE RINGSIDE*

The court case evidently reached a resolution in April 1938, with papers reporting that the only remaining action required in the divorce was a property settlement.

Unhappy over the impending divorce and property settlement, and in very poor health, Warner Oland left on a steamship for Sweden in May 1938. He hoped to regain his health in his homeland and return to California in September to complete the Chan picture—but Warner Oland would never again set foot on a movie set.

In Sweden, Oland wrote to friends, telling them how happy he was to sleep again in his mother's bed and under his father's roof. But whatever peace Warner Oland may have found was short-lived. A short time later, a great acting career came to an untimely end when the actor developed bronchial pneumonia and was hospitalized in Stockholm.

At 3:00 PM Stockholm time, August 6, 1938, the Black Camel visited Warner Oland. It was just two months short of his 58th birthday.

Ironically, a reconciliation was in the works between Oland and his wife, who was rushing to his bedside in Sweden when death intervened. Overcome when informed of her husband's death, Mrs. Oland postponed the rest of her trip briefly, then boarded a steamship for Europe to attend the funeral. She remained single until her death three decades later in 1968.

Keye Luke was reported to have broken down on the set when he learned of the actor's death. "It is not possible for me to say in words my feelings for Warner Oland," Luke told the press. "My grief is that of a son who has lost his father." (It is not hard to imagine how Luke felt, as a viewing of any of the Chan films readily shows that there must have existed a real bond of affection between the two actors. When Charlie Chan hugs son number one, it's with genuine fondness.)

A day after the actor's death, *The New York Times* noted that "another of the cycles of deaths in groups of three" had been completed. Oland's old acting partner, Pearl White, had died two days earlier in Paris and Charlie Chan director John G. Blystone had died in Hollywood the same day as Oland.

Shortly after Oland's death, *CHARLIE CHAN AT THE RINGSIDE* was rewritten as *MR. MOTO'S GAMBLE*. In a move to salvage footage from the Chan production, Keye Luke was kept in the new story as Lee Chan, here a student of crime expert Mr. Moto (Peter Lorre)! The Moto series was destined to fizzle out when the United States entered World War II a few years later, and the market for Japanese detectives understandably dried up.)

Warner Oland's passing saddened public and film industry alike. Said movie mogul Darryl Zanuck, "He was in life the kindly, gentle, and considerate man the film public knew and loved. None who knew either the man or the actor can ever forget him."

And indeed, Warner Oland left behind a legend and a legacy of classic films that the world will never forget.



## SAINTS AND SINNERS

*Continued from page 57*

*THE DAMNED* fame), a child who witnesses a scene of debauchery involving his father (Andrew Faulds) in the name of the merry olde Hellfire Club, and then is spirited away by his mother. Years later, he returns home (in the person of Keith Michell) as a circus acrobat, hoping to claim his birthright. After some decent swordplay action, he gets it, but who cares? What happened to the hell-raising Hellfire Club?

In supporting roles, Peter Cushing and Adrienne Corri are along for the ride and are reason enough to see any movie—even this one. Still, due to its failure to make good on its titular promise, this Jimmy Sangster-scripted swash-buckler is okay, but not much more. It might have been better served by a less awe-inspiring title.

The Regal International Production, produced, directed, and photographed by Baker and Berman, was filmed in May of 1960 and was released in the UK in March 1961, in color. The American release (in black and white through Embassy) came in September 1963. *The New York Herald Tribune* (October 10) was not impressed: "These orgies are strictly for grandma . . . nothing more than a routine derring-do melodrama."

As any self-respecting Scarlet Streeter probably knows, the Hellfire Club actually existed. The Club's aims—somewhat political, mostly pornographic—fell far short of those espoused by the Boy Scouts. In fact, this was one nasty lot, run by Lord Francis Dashwood, and few outsiders mourned its passing. (For those interested in trivia—and you obviously are—actress Marla Landi of Hammer's *THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES* married into the family and is now Lady Dashwood.)

If Baker/Berman had allowed Jimmy Sangster to tell the true story of this group, they would have had one hell of a movie!

While definitely not horror or sci-fi—or even borderline—*THE SIEGE OF SIDNEY STREET* (1960) deserves mention simply because it's the best picture made by the Baker/Berman team. Based on an actual incident that took place in London's East End in 1911, it tells a disturbing story of anarchy and violence.

Mannering (Donald Sinden), a London police officer, infiltrates a gang of Russian anarchists led by "Peter the Painter" (Peter Wyngarde of 1962's *BURN, WITCH, BURN*). The gang commits robberies to finance their political aims, and is fast becoming a menace. Due to Mannering's courage and ingenuity, the gang is trapped by over 150 police officers and soldiers. A bloody street fight ensues and, except for "The Painter," the Russians all die in a fire that engulfs Sidney Street. "Peter the Painter" is never captured.

*THE SIEGE OF SIDNEY STREET* began production on January 4, 1960, at Ardmore Studios in Ireland. Location work—including exteriors of Sidney Street—were shot in Dublin, which looked, apparently, more like the London of 1911 than did present-day London. Following an October

11 trade show at Studio One, the film premiered at the Leicester Square Odeon on October 22 to the best reviews Baker and Berman ever received: "The famous street battle is well handled" (*Sunday Times*, October 23), "It catches the period well enough, and shots of little East End streets (actually Dublin!) wet and shining with rain are admirable" (*London Times*, October 24); "Because Robert S. Baker and Monty Berman produced, directed, photographed, and edited, it's a simple matter to decide where to dish out blame or praise. In this instance, it's praise." (*Variety*, October 19); and "Strong, well-made entertainment that might do the British film industry a power of good . . . dramatic lighting and rich photography of actual (!) settings . . . the violence rarely degenerates into witless bang-banging." (*Films and Filming*, November).

Despite the well-deserved reviews, *THE SIEGE OF SIDNEY STREET* died at the box office due to two major factors: the no-name cast, and the fact that, by 1960, the true-life event was long forgotten even by most Londoners.

The picture has an added bonus at its climax, though, for horror fans. A young Winston Churchill is glimpsed at the inferno, chomping on a cigar. Wait a minute . . . it looks like Jimmy Sangster! And it is, in his only acting role to date. The moonlighting scripter even got reviewed: "Jimmy Sangster has a cheeky cameo as Home Secretary Winston Churchill." (*Variety*, October 19). He did a nice job on the script, too.

Next, Baker and Berman bravely entered the dread territory of the "horror comedy" with *WHAT A CARVE-UP!* (1961), based, very loosely, on the Frank King novel that inspired Boris Karloff's *THE GHOUL* (1933).

Ernie (Kenneth Connor), a semiliterate proofreader of sex/horror novels, attends the reading of his Uncle Gabriel's will, surrounded by unsavory types played by Donald Pleasence, Dennis Price, and Michael Gough (as a clubfooted butler). Sadly, no one has been left anything and, when they are trapped in the mansion by a sudden storm, a masked killer begins knocking them off one by one. It turns out (surprise!) that Gabriel (Philip O'Flynn) isn't really dead; he simply wanted to observe his greedy relatives and give them what's what. Poor Ernie; he thinks he's at least won the lovely Elizabeth (Shirley Eaton), but she runs off with Adam Faith (a rising pop star of the period).

Director Pat Jackson kept Ray Cooney and Tony Hilton's script moving well enough and the production values were up to B & B standards, but horror comedies are tough to pull off. This one isn't in the same league as *ABBOTT AND COSTELLO MEET FRANKENSTEIN* (1948).

Michael Gough lent his considerable talents to Baker and Berman's *WHAT A CARVE-UP!* (1962), a reworking of Karloff's *THE GHOUL*, but the payback was minimal.



or *YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN* (1974), but that's hardly an indictment. The picture has a Carry On flavor (and some Carry On stars) and it's up to the viewer to decide if that's good or bad.

*WHAT A CARVE-UP!* was trade shown in London on September 13, 1961. *Variety* (September 20) found it "heavy going, despite a good cast of experienced actors. Unfortunately, there is a mixture of styles . . . some playing straight, others going for the frolicsome."

The movie surfaced in America a year later as *NO PLACE LIKE HOMICIDE*, but, unlike wine, had not improved with age. *The New York Times* (September 13) sniffed: ". . . it demonstrates just how acute the motion picture product shortage really is."

Despite many of their pictures having been successful at the box office—and a few with the critics—Baker and Berman finally found their greatest success on television.

In 1962, they acquired the rights to Leslie Charteris' modern-day adventurer, Simon Templar—better known as The Saint. Played previously in the movies by George Sanders, Louis Hayward, and Hugh Sinclair (and recently by Val Kilmer), the character found his true portrayer in Roger Moore. *THE SAINT*, backed by Sir Lew Grade's ITC, was filmed at Elstree, and remains one of the best remembered series of the sixties.

"Baker and Berman think alike on most creative issues," reported *The Kinematograph Weekly* (August 13). "They share the same offices, rarely raise their voices, and are terribly calm and detached." The pair worked together successfully as a team for 20 years, which, in the world of movies and television, is like three lifetimes. If their pictures seemed to promise more than they sometimes delivered, so what? Most things do.



## VAMPIRE CIRCUS

*Continued from page 60*

imagination in 1974's notorious *FLAVIA, THE REBEL NUN*, after which he immediately changed his name to Higgins) remain nearly as discreet as Corri. (Corlan does doff his shirt to make love to Christina Paul, but the camera doesn't favor him.)

Nevertheless, if one accepts the vampire's kiss as a metaphor for doing the dirty, *VAMPIRE CIRCUS* is one of Hammer's more erotic thrillers, and the sex seems to come in all shapes and sizes. Before he "dies," Mitterhouse discloses a distinct preference for very young girls. The twins, Helga and Heinrich, seem inordinately fond of each other. One of the most shocking scenes concerns this twosome enticing two adolescent boys (brothers Roderick and Barnaby Shaw) into a bizarre, interdimensional mirror that is actually the entrance to the tomb of Count Mitterhouse. Floating through a timeless void (all voids, it goes without saying, are timeless), the twins take the boys lovingly into their arms and kill them. All that's missing is a seduction scene between Anne and Emil, but alas, we are still several years away from Anne Rice and the homoerotic break through of her *Interview With the Vampire* (1976).

*VAMPIRE CIRCUS* is newly released to laserdisc and the presentation almost does the film full justice. Almost, because there is a stretch in which an annoying series of faint horizontal lines persist in putting in an appearance. Almost, because the color is not quite as rich as it is on the companion discs of *TWINS OF EVIL* and *COUNTESS DRACULA*. (The latter features Ingrid Pitt as an aged crone who bathes in blood and regains her youth—though not enough youth to pass herself off as an 18-year old.) Happily, though, all three discs are the complete cuts, including all the blood and nudity never before seen (at least legally) in these here States. *VAMPIRE CIRCUS* is available from Image/Hallmark. Both sides of the disc are CLV, the side break is not intrusive, and it sells for \$39.99.

—Drew Sullivan





## SCREEN AND SCREEN

Continued from page 25

### STAR TREK: FIRST CONTACT

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Had it been a STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION episode, the plot of the eighth Trek movie probably would have come off as a good one taken in context with others in a given television season. But it stands as the only voyage of the Starship Enterprise in two years. Less muddled than the indefensible STAR TREK: GENERATIONS FIRST CONTACT at least makes an attempt at cater-

ing to the non-initiated by minimizing obscure Trek references that only the winner of a convention trivia contest could understand.

Since the USS Enterprise featured in the previous film was carelessly driven into a planet by its staff therapist (Marina Sirtis, acting without a license), the crew has been given yet another brand new starship to break. The bad guys, the Borg, are drawn from the TV series. Once again, they are attacking Earth, but this time they take a riff from THE TERMINATOR and go back in time to try to kill the inventor of superluminal space flight, Zephram Cochrane, with the new Enterprise hot on their heels. Cochrane, a character first seen 30 years ago in the original STAR TREK series, was then played by handsome, square-jawed Glenn Corbett. But the character is reinvented for this nineties film and is now played by Farmer Hoggett... er, James Cromwell as a seedy... er, colorful drunk, who doesn't seem to care if he invents warp drive or not.

Flying in the face of the series' original concept that the Borg were a single unified "collective mind" with no central ruler, we soon find out that not only do they have a queen (GHOST STORY's Alice Krige), but she happens to have snuck aboard the Enterprise with some friends. And not only is she a power-crazed Cruella DeVil with conduits in her skull, she's also horny as hell. She takes an immediate interest in our old android friend Data (Brent Spiner), seducing him even though she's supposed to be an emotionless cyborg with nothing on her mind but assimilating

civilizations. The whole Borg Queen concept, and especially her strange need to see if Data is "fully functional," just makes no sense whatsoever.

Longtime Trekkies will be pleased by the filmmakers' bringing established Trek mythology into the story. Zephram Cochrane and his deeds was established in the haunting original episode "Metamorphosis." Earth's third world war was established in the silly original episode "Bread and Circuses." The Borg were first seen in the NEXT GENERATION episode "Q Who," which is much better than this movie.

Not to be entirely negative, there is plenty to enjoy in FIRST CONTACT. Alfred Woodard turns in a fine performance as Cochrane's mechanic. Industrial Light and Magic's visuals are dazzling, and Jerry Goldsmith's score is... well, by Jerry Goldsmith! There is plenty to roll one's eyes at, too. One quickly tires of Wolf's (Michael Dorn) macho posturing, Data's damned emotion chip, gratuitous holodeck scenes, and cameos by actors from the other current Star Trek series. Never mind, just sit back and watch the pretty colors. I know this film is well liked by many fans and critics, but this 30-year Trekkie is still waiting for a movie that engages the gray matter as well as did the best episodes of the series.

The picture is recorded on a single two-sided disk in glorious 2.35:1 letter-box format, in Dolby digital sound, and packaged in your basic sleeve with b.u.r.b. and chapter stops listed on the back.

—John E. Payne

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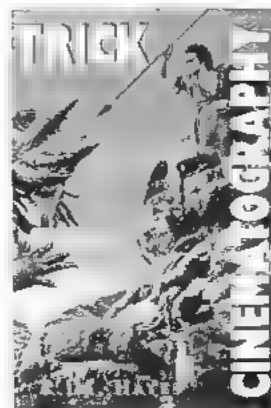
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## GLORIA STUART

*Continued from page 35*

GS: Oh, he was wonderful to work with, and very gung-ho.

SS: You have no scenes with Leonardo DiCaprio in *TITANIC*, but we assume you've met him?

GS: Oh, yes. Before the picture started shooting, there was a cast party, and then we met again when I went down to Ba a to watch the wonderful scene where Leonardo and Kate rescue the little boy in the corridor. And in England, we were at the Royal Gala together. He's charming.

SS: Everyone has got to be asking you about your interpretation of the final scenes of *TITANIC*.

GS: (Laughs) I have to ask James. I keep meaning to, but other things keep coming up. I don't know what he had in mind, but thinking about it—if Rose had sold the necklace to support herself, then she would have been rediscovered as not having gone down with the ship. I'm sure that was a risk she didn't want to take. The other theory is that, seeing the unhappiness that the search for this gem brought to the fortune hunters and that it had been an unhappy gift, Rose figured, "Let's get it over with. It's finished. Done. Over the bow."

SS: And what about the very ending? Is Rose dreaming of being reunited with Jack and the victims of the disaster, or has she actually died and joined them?

GS: Well, James said to me, "We don't know." I guess it's up to everybody to decide for themselves and give it their own interpretation. I would say that it's a dream, but I could have died. (Laughs)

SS: Not you. You still have a lot to do!

GS: Well, I thank you. Yes, I do. I really think I do.

## THOMAS BECK

*Continued from page 47*

And I said, "Oh, my God. How stupid!" So I went to see her, and told her I was sorry she was gone and wished her well. Well, the studio found out and was very unpleasant to me.

SS: That's certainly a surprise! We'd heard that Tyrone Power had an affair with Errol Flynn!

TB: (Laughs) Everybody had an affair with everybody out there! The people who said so wanted to make money writing about it. Sometimes it was so but many times it was pure imagination.

SS: Did you find yourself reading the papers and finding out that you'd gone out with someone you'd never even met?

TB: I wasn't getting much publicity of any kind. And I wasn't objecting to it!

SS: Were gay actors encouraged to be seen with as many women as possible?

TB: Well, that was the policy of the studios. I think it was established by MGM, to the point where they insisted on this type of coupling, in case there was any question of sexual preference. And, of course, if there were questions, then they made a decision as to whether they



Morgan, the butler of *THE OLD DARK HOUSE* (1932), was Boris Karloff's follow-up to his great success as the Monster of *FRANKENSTEIN* (1931). Gloria Stuart, of course, was the Damsel in Distress. What she was doing in distress instead of the clothes she came in with, only James Whale knew!

would drop the actor or cover it up. It depended on the actor's financial value.

SS: Were there cases where an actor was dropped by a studio?

TB: I wouldn't really know. I did know it was policy.

SS: In *CHARLIE CHAN IN EGYPT*, you and Warner Oland enter the tomb at night. There is a secret panel and an underground lake that you dive into. Did you do that stunt work yourself?

TB: I did and I had flu at the time. There was another film called *CRACK UP*, where we were all in a plane. It went down in the ocean and we spent two weeks in water up to our waists, playing those scenes.

SS: That was your first film with Peter Lorre, wasn't it?

TB: Yes, that's right. And then I made some of the Mr. Moto films. There was a Peter Lorre film where I jumped out of a boat and swam to shore, and somebody was firing shots on either side of me.

SS: That was in *THANK YOU, MR. MOTO*.

TB: Well, they hadn't told me about it, and I got so Goddamned mad that, when I got out of the water, I just walked off the set and went to my dressing room and shut the door and wouldn't answer for a couple of hours. When I came out I told them that I thought it was inexcusable not to let me know what was gonna happen.

SS: You said you had better parts in the Chan films when they were made by Fox. When the merger came with 20th Century, your parts were not as meaty.

TB: That didn't apply particularly to Charlie Chan. I don't know whether this should be publicized or not, but one of

the reasons the studio kept me with Warner Oland is that they discovered he enjoyed my company and talking with me, and didn't drink as much! (Laughs) That's what they told me. I was never aware that he drank a lot.

SS: Another famous costar was Shirley Temple, in *HEIDI*. Is it true what they say about working with child stars? Is it all that difficult?

TB: Well, I'll tell you about *HEIDI*. Shirley was beginning to grow, then, and they were trying to make her look small. One of the things they did to make Shirley look small was to have us carry her around a lot. I'd pick her up and carry her, and she used to kick me in the crotch! And that was painful! So I got to thinking, and I went to a friend of mine, Michael Whalen, who had been in a Shirley Temple picture. I said, "What do you do about that?" And he said, "Oh, very simple. Just drop her." So I did! She sat on the ground and looked at me, and shook her head, and that was that! She didn't kick me anymore.

SS: Was filmmaking a happier experience before Fox merged with 20th Century?

TB: Well, it was different, that's for sure. They were very nice people. I worked with Warner Oland, Lew Ayres, and Pat Paterson, *LIFE BEGINS AT FORTY* with Will Rogers and Richard Cromwell, *MUSIC IS MAGIC* with Alice Faye.

SS: Well, we'll be telling everyone your Shirley Temple story; we'll be dining out on that.

TB: And she's an ambassador today!

SS: Maybe that's how she got the job.

TB: (Laughs) but not from me!

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## HERCULES UNCLOSETED

Continued from page 14

"Heracles [that's Herc] captured him [Hylas, that is] because of his good looks. Although he became the hero's lover, and voyaged with him on the ship of the Argonauts, Hylas could not resist the endearments of the water nymphs. When sent to fetch water, he was pulled down into a pool and, despite the cries of Heracles from the shore, was never seen again."

Serves the little tramp right, if you ask me, but you'll find no waterlogged nymphs splashing about in **JASON AND THE ARGONAUTS**. Instead, Hercules and Hylas make the mistake of messing with the gods' family jewels, bringing to life the Titanic Talos, who proceeds to make mincemeat of the Argonauts. Hercules has stolen a spear from the gods—actually, the gods being on the large side, it's an overgrown hat pin or some such—and when he drops it in flight, Hylas goes back to fetch it and is crushed beneath the crumbling Titan. The pointed symbolism of Hylas, who didn't want Hercules to filch the thing in the first place, turning back to retrieve his companion's rapier is subtle but effective, and probably never entered the minds of anyone actually connected with the film. Nevertheless, even if purely by accident, Harryhausen and Company came up with a death for Hylas far more in keeping with his love of Hercules than anything you'll actually find in *Bullfinch's Mythology*.

According to Jeff Rovin in *From the Land Beyond Beyond: The Films of Willis O'Brien and Ray Harryhausen* (Berkeley, 1977), "... if all the players, it is Nigel Green who truly shines as Hercules. Completely unlike the overly muscled, utterly serious character created by Steve Reeves, Green's Hercules is boisterous, cocky, and hedonistic." He is certainly boisterous and hedonistic, but the moral climate of the early sixties, combined, perhaps, with the prejudice characteristic of Harryhausen's generation, doesn't allow him to be quite as "cocky" as legend would have him.

Ervolino quotes Joan Mertens, curator in the Greek and Roman department of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, who said of the relationship between Herc and Hylas:

"I think that in ancient Greece, the perception is different from ours in many ways and for many reasons. There was not the kind of social stigma that now exists in some places. At various times of one's life, for youth to be courted by a man was probably not the socially unacceptable state of affairs that we may see it as."

Mertens mentioned that Hercules was often pictured in paintings dating as far back as 600 B.C. in the company of young men—not only Hylas, but his own nephew, Iolaos—even though the legendary strong man was married twice, to Megara and Deianira. Even so, Ervolino concludes that the majority of experts are of the opinion that Hercules definitely had a male lover or two (or three), but that he wasn't a homosexual...

Hey! Sounds like Hollywood, doesn't it?  
—Drew Sullivan





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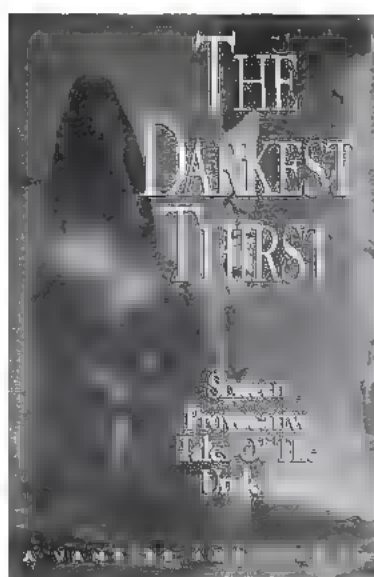
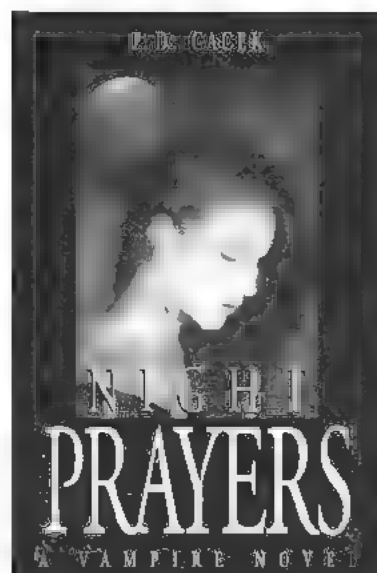
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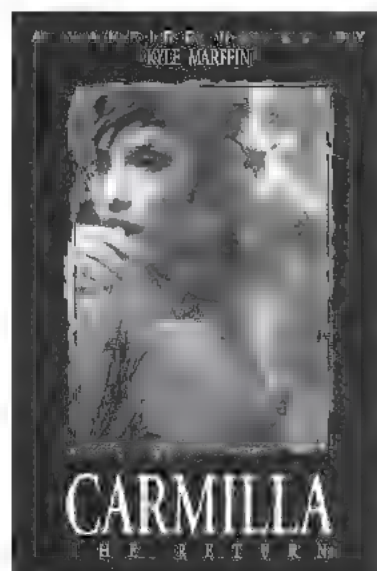
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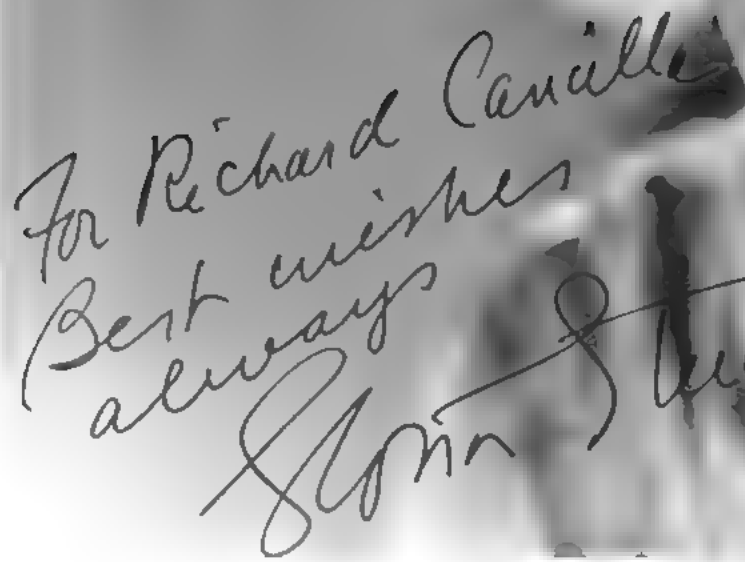












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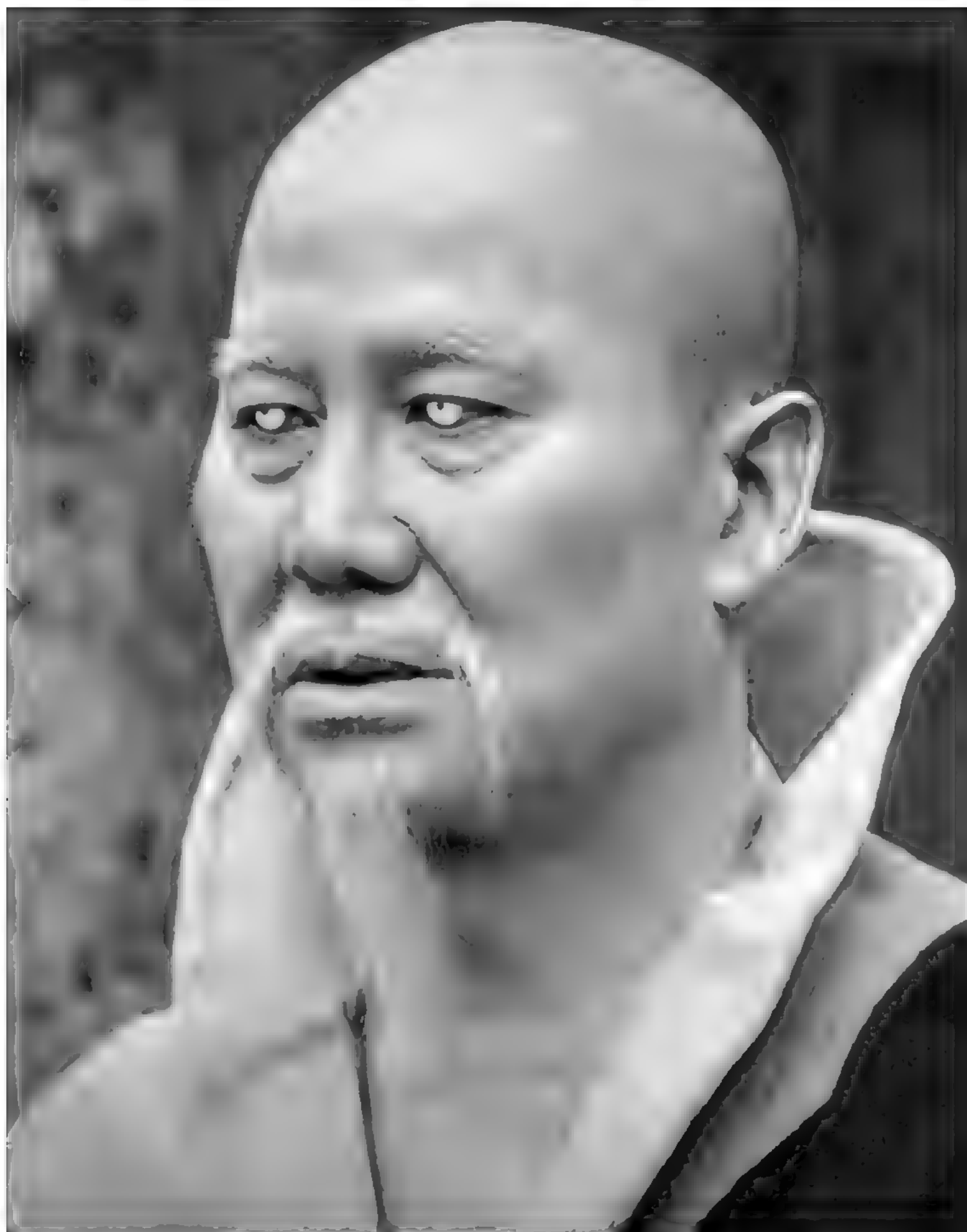








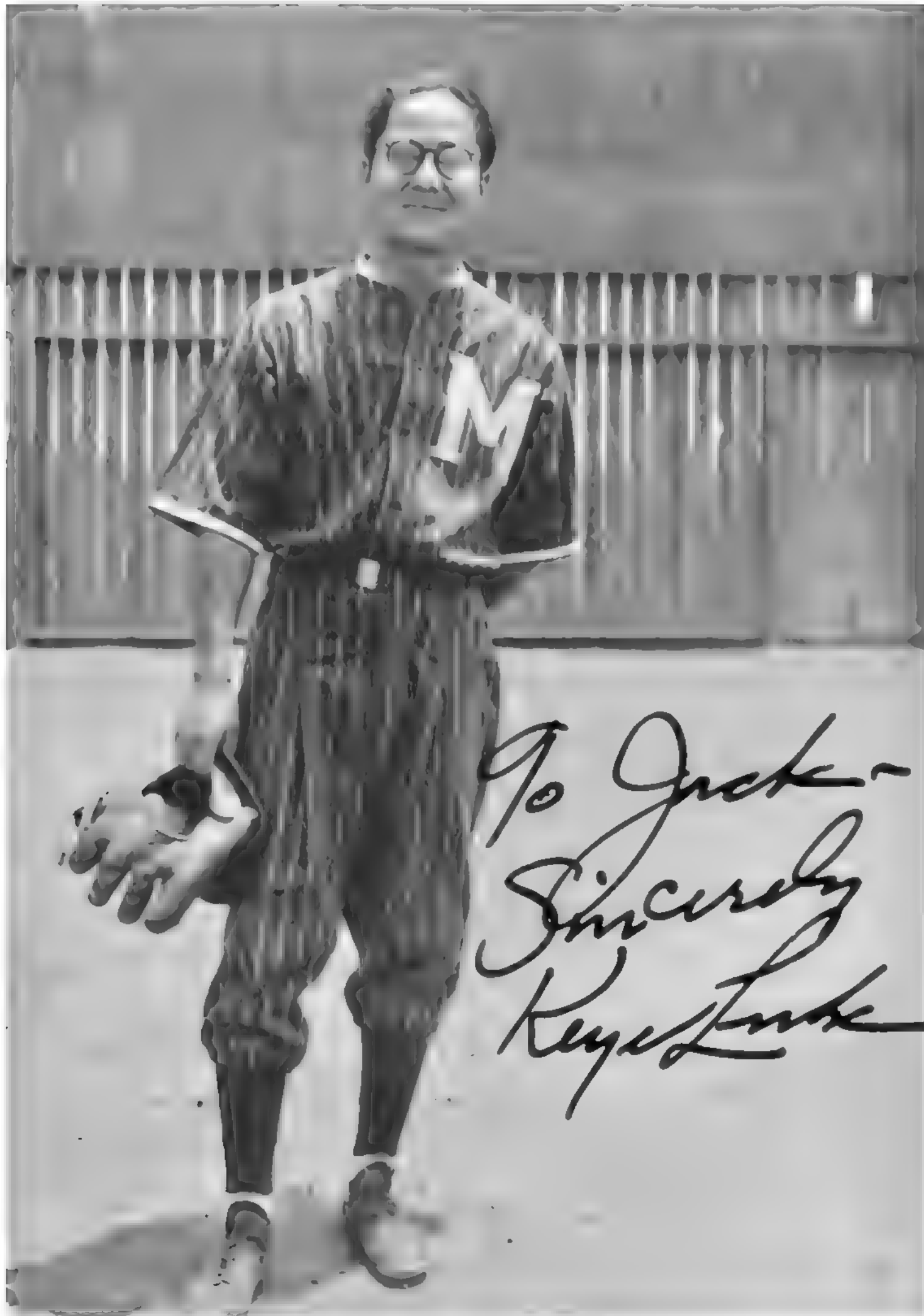






NY-8062-2. Keye Luke, noted Chinese artist, who has been picked for a prominent part in the coming "KO-Radio musical movie, "Ho, Shanghai!" Although his family have been in the United States for two generations, Keye Luke was born in China. He will also act as technical advisor on the Chinese portions of the production. He also is being considered for the lead in "Broken Blossoms" if it is produced by Radio.

























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